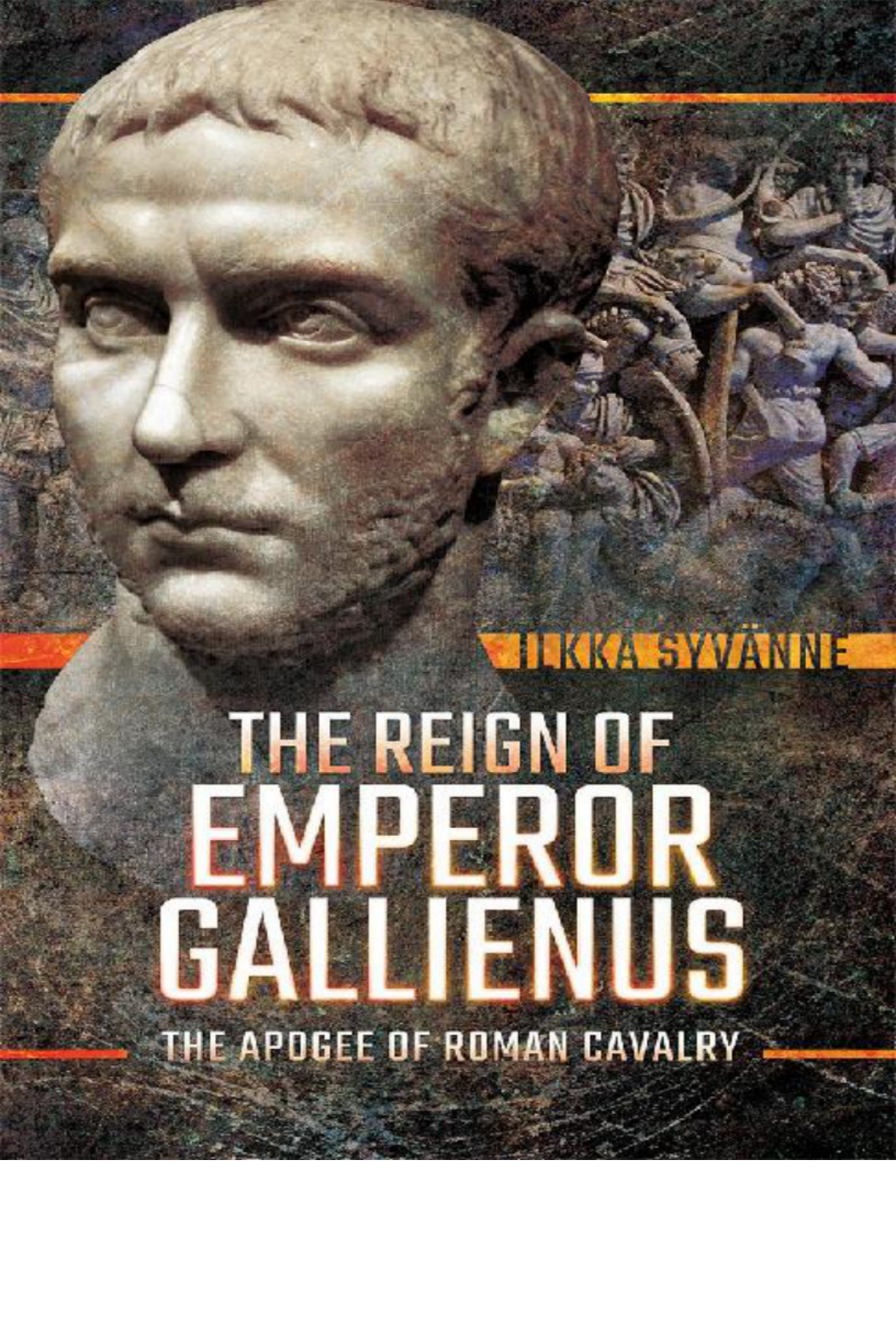


The Reign of Emperor Gallienus

Ilkka Syvanne

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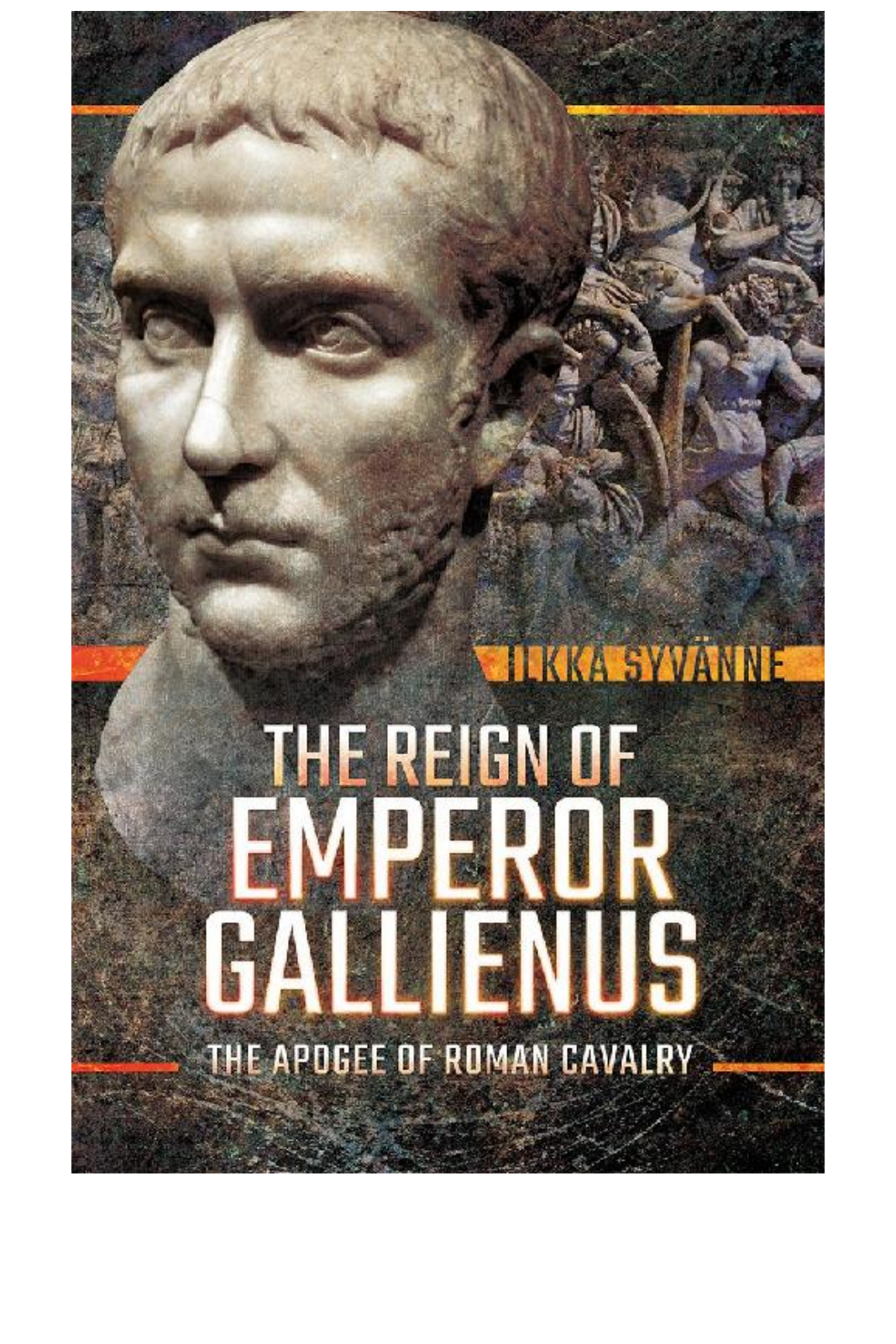
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TIKKASVÄNNE

THE REIGN OF EMPEROR GALLIENUS

THE APOGEE OF ROMAN CAVALRY

A marble bust of Emperor Gallienus is the central focus, shown in profile facing left. The background features a relief of a battle scene with soldiers on horseback. The text 'HUKKASVÄNNI' is written in a stylized, orange and white font across the middle of the image.

HUKKASVÄNNI

THE REIGN OF
EMPEROR
GALLIENUS

THE APOGEE OF ROMAN CAVALRY

The Reign of Emperor Gallienus

*‘There are
known knowns,
known unknowns,
unknown unknowns,
unknowns knowns.*

MEMO: February 4, 2004.

SUBJECT: What you know.’

Donald Rumsfeld



*For my wife Sini, and children Ari and Nanna for their patience;
and for the Great Masters Uderzo and Goscinny*

The Reign of Emperor Gallienus

The Apogee of Roman Cavalry

Dr. Ilkka Syvanne



IMP. GALLIENVS AVG

REVERSE: ALACRITATI (NO S.C.)

A coin celebrating the famous alacrity of Gallienus
and his equally famous cavalry forces.

The Pegasus on the reverse is a symbol of cavalry
and in this case a symbol of Gallienus' *equites*.



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The Latin text states: '*cum iret ad hortos nominis sui, omnia Palatina officia sequebantur. ibant et praefecti et magistri officiorum omnium adhibebanturque convivii et nationibus lavabant simul cum principe. admittebantur saepe etiam mulieres, cum ipso pulchrae pullae, cum illis anus deformes, et iocari se dicebant, cum orbem terrarum undique perdidisset.*'

The slightly sanitized and inaccurate translation of David Magie (HA, pp.53–55) is as follows:

'Whenever he went to the gardens named after him, all the staff of the Palace followed him. And there went with him, too, the prefects and

the chiefs of all the staffs, and they were invited to his banquets and bathed in the pools along with the prince. Women, too, were often sent in, beautiful girls with the emperor, but with the others ugly old hags. And he used to say that he was making merry, whereas he had brought the world on all sides to ruin.'

I have taken some artistic liberties in the presentation because we do not possess detailed information regarding the building and its pools nor do we possess busts or statues or paintings of the persons other than Gallienus (here with his hair coloured blond). I have also tried to present the women in such a way that my interpretation follows the period taste in what was beautiful and what was not. However, I have used later works of art as sources of inspiration for the persons presented and Uderzo for the bath scene so that my drawings should be seen as homage to these great artists. Furthermore, I have made the assumption that the prostitutes would have had red hair. My intention is not to denigrate the women in any way or manner. My intention is to present the reality as accurately as possible.

Of particular note is the fact that the members of the upper classes (including those who rose through the ranks) did not see anything wrong in having sex publicly with the prostitutes and that it was acceptable for the emperor to do so too. The arrival of the Christian morals changed all this by the 360s (see Syvanne, 'La Campaña' with *MHLR Vol 2*). In fact, the quote shows that the guests were expecting to be entertained in this manner. Consequently, it is quite clear that the reason for the public outrage concerning Pipa was not Gallienus' adultery with the barbarian woman, but the false rumours that Pipa would have been his second wife and not his concubine.

It is actually possible that this joke of Gallienus was one of the reasons why we find the praetorian prefect Heraclianus among the principal plotters against Gallienus – or possibly even the only reason, if he was a really petty-minded person. (© Dr. Ilkka Syvänne)

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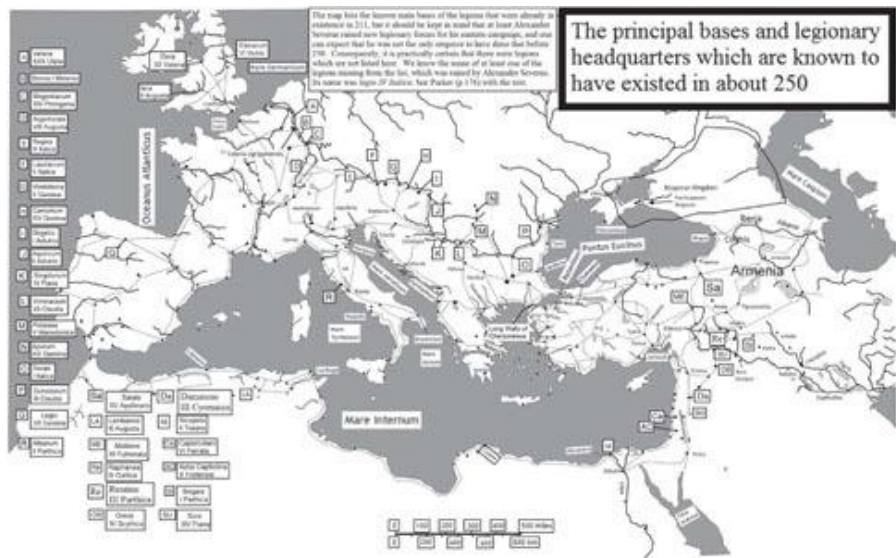
Introduction

This book has been long in the making. It began as a project to understand the development of the Roman army and its cavalry forces, of which the reign of Gallienus formed only a small part. The first manuscript was ready in 2009, after which it was shelved until the Fall of 2016. The text was finished by the end of that year and the illustrations in January 2017. It is thanks to the encouragement of my wife and children that the book was taken out of the old files and finishing touches added.

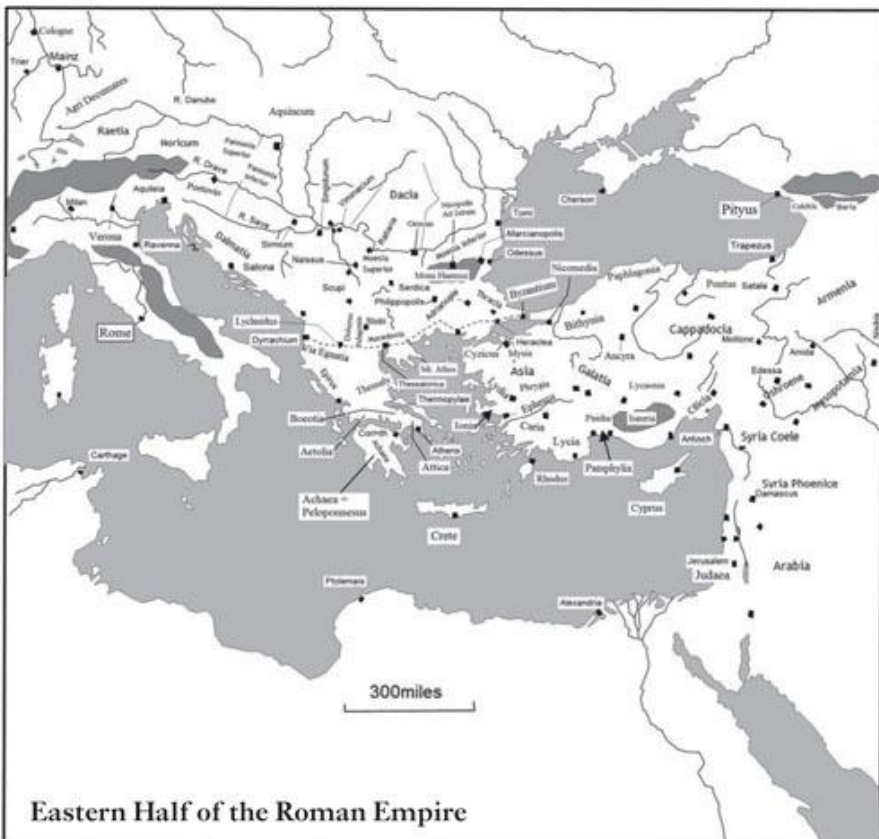
However, the publication of the *Warrior of Rome* novels by Harry Sidebottom has also had a role in my decision to take the old manuscript off the 'bookcase' and have it published. I thought that it would be worthwhile to provide a narrative military history of the very same events so that his readers would be able to get the necessary military background information of the very important reign of Gallienus. Please note, however, that I do not provide a complete list of references to his novels, but only occasionally note that he has provided a fact-based fictitious narrative of these very same events. This is after all an academic study of the reign of Gallienus. The readers will obviously note that I date some of the events differently and that there are also some differences in the interpretation of the military material, but the readers should keep in mind that the very poor survival of evidence for this era means that the material quite often allows many different interpretations, as has also been noted by Sidebottom and so many other historians of this era. I will present all of these uncertainties in the following narrative together with the reasons why I have adopted a certain conclusion.

Abbreviations

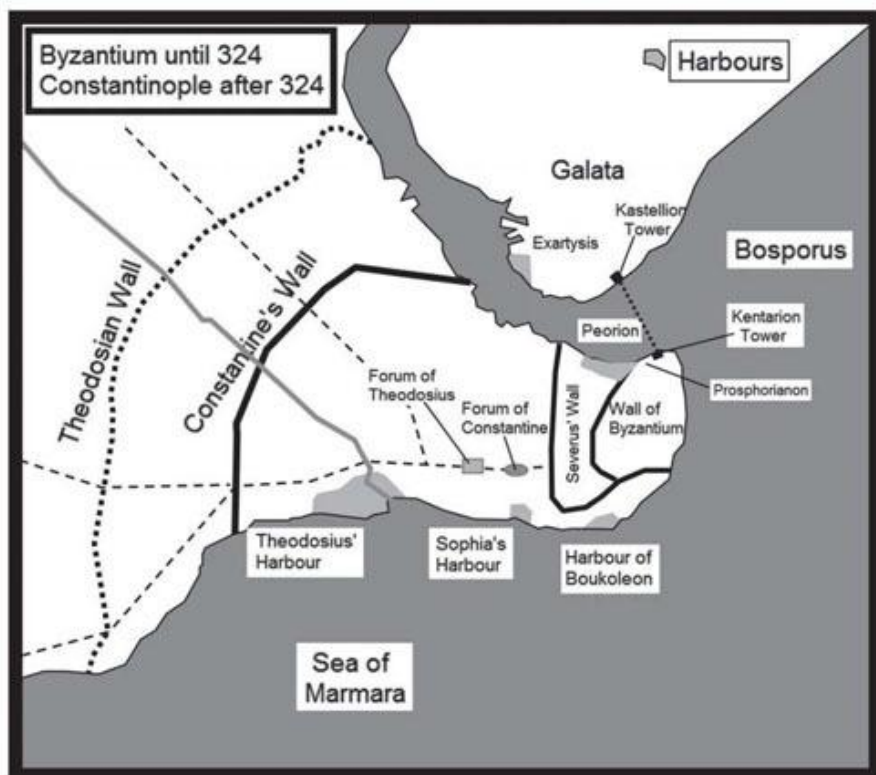
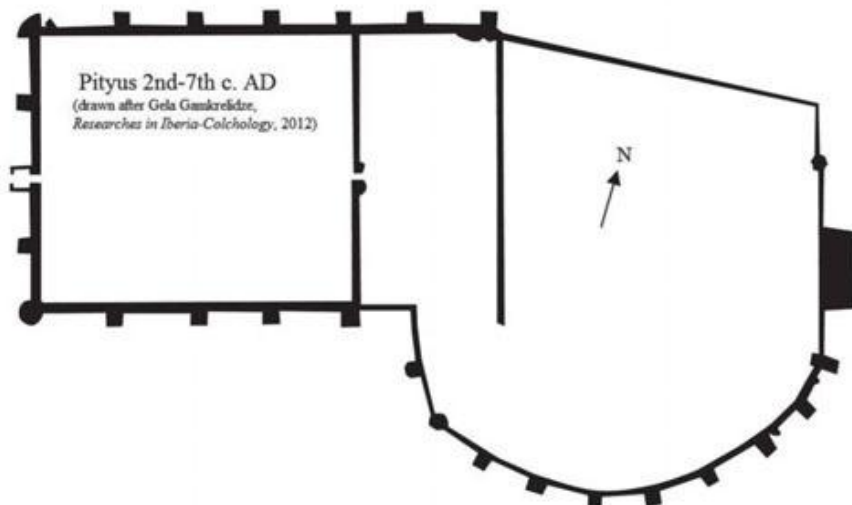
COs	Cohorts
HA	<i>Historia Augusta, Scriptores Historiae Augustae, Augustan History</i>
HA TR.	<i>Historia Augusta, Tyranni Triginta, The Thirty Pretenders</i> (Trebellius Pollio)
REF1	Denotes translations in Dodgeon and Lieu
SKZ	<i>Res Gestae Divis Shapuris</i>



Western Half of the Roman Empire

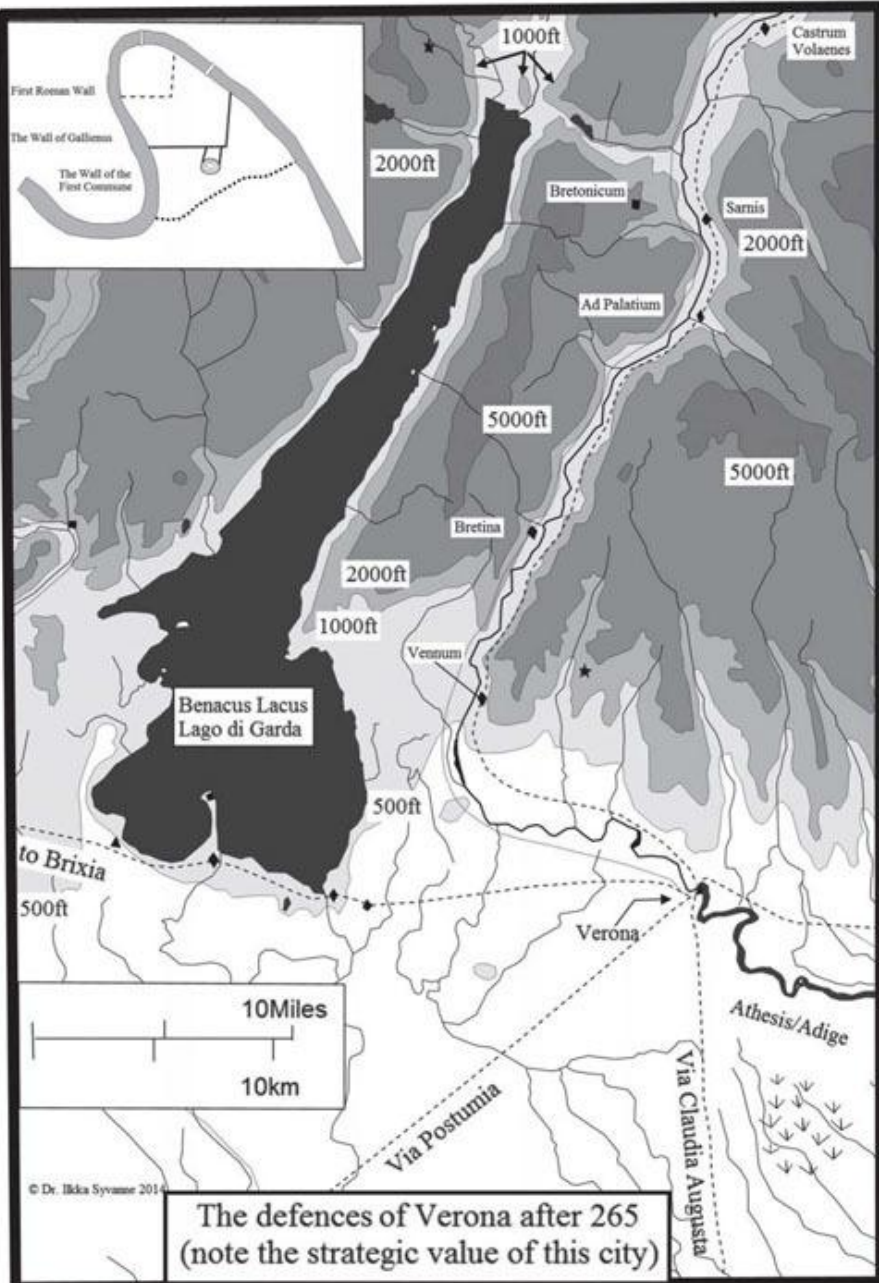


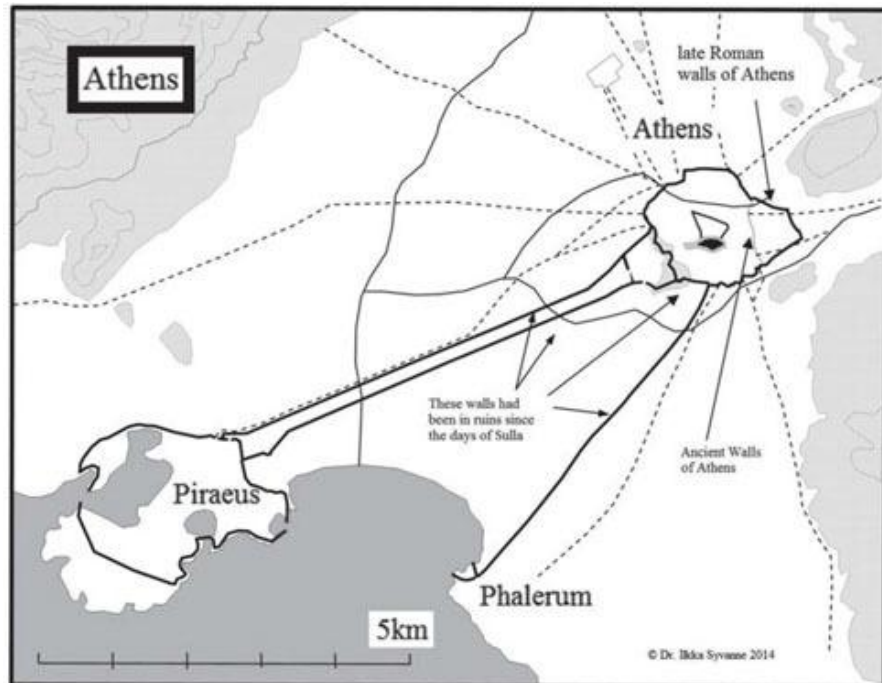
Eastern Half of the Roman Empire





Balkans drawn after J.J. Wilkes (2005, 126-7) and Barrington Atlas with some changes.





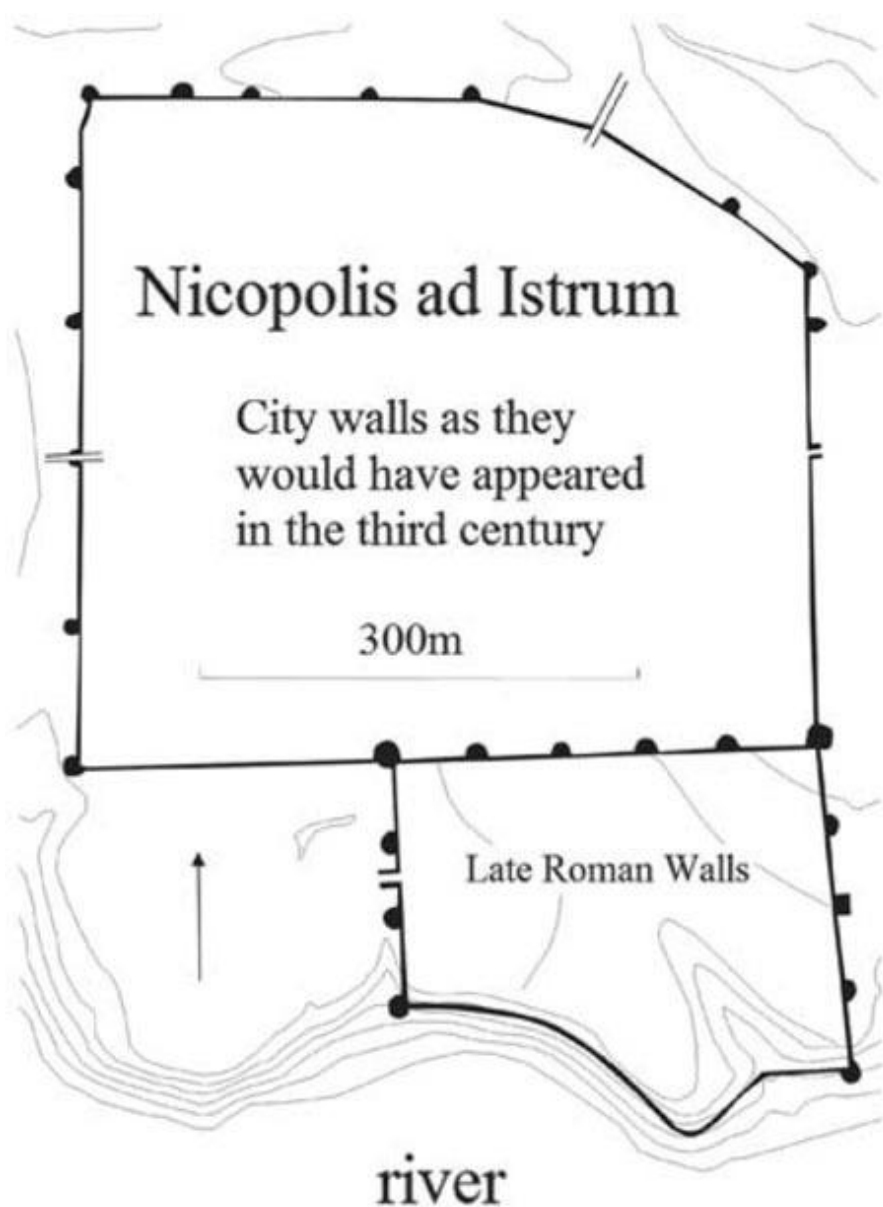
Nicopolis ad Istrum

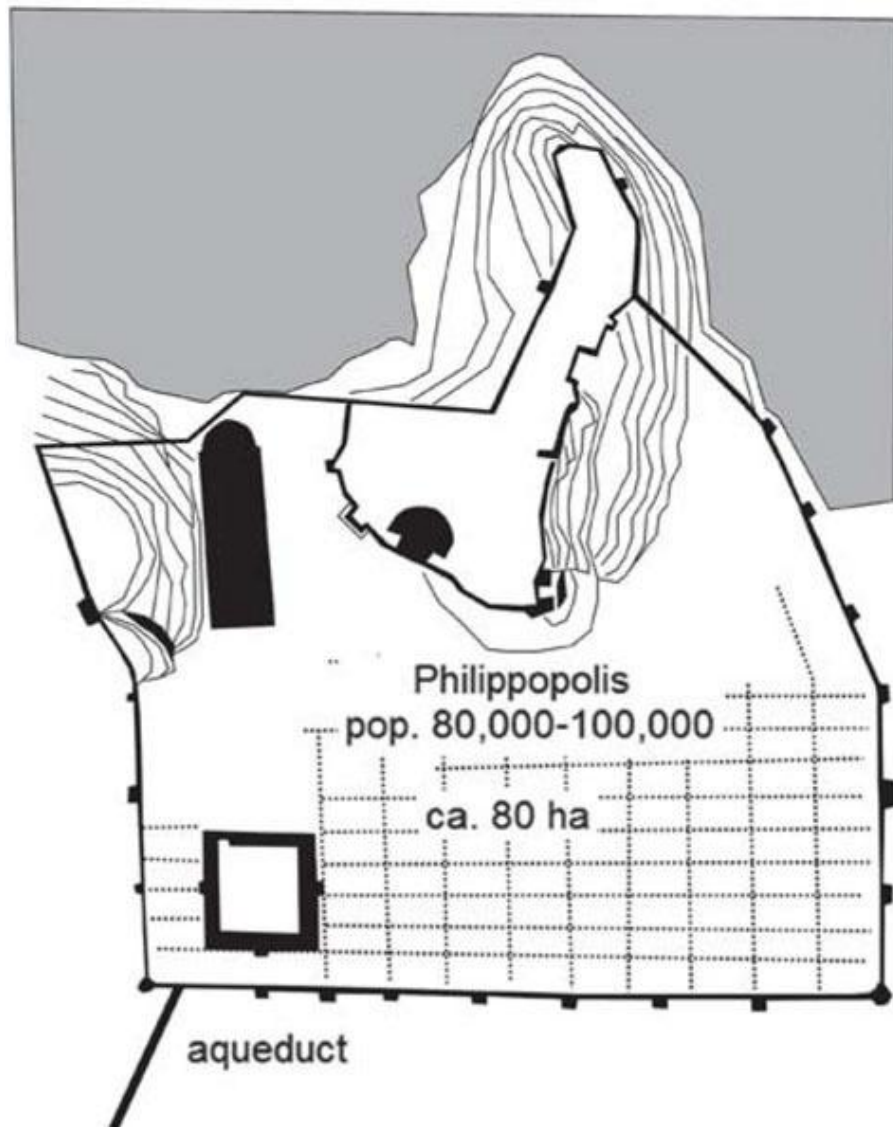
City walls as they
would have appeared
in the third century

300m

Late Roman Walls

river

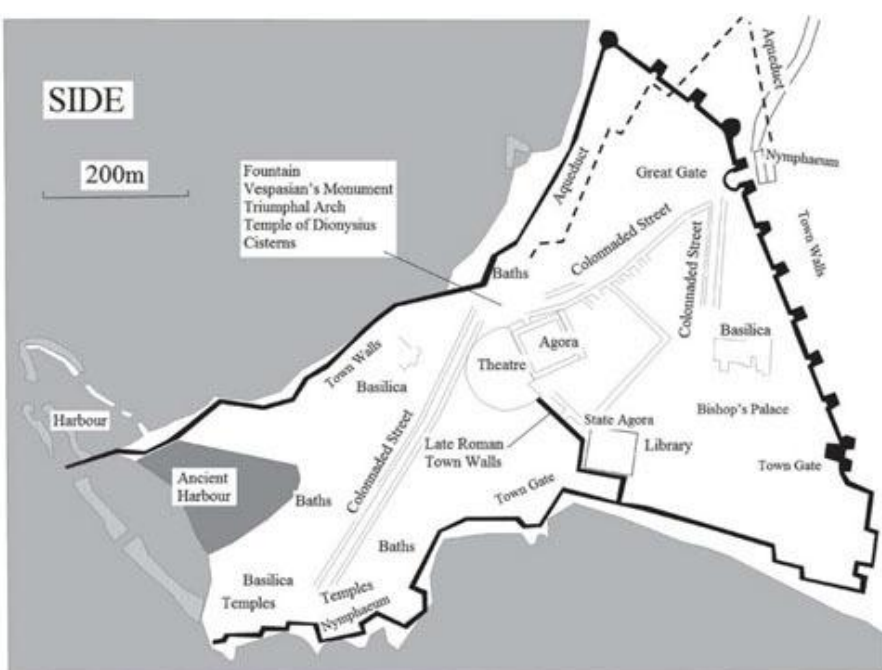




SIDE

200m

Fountain
Vespasian's Monument
Triumphal Arch
Temple of Dionysius
Cisterns



Chapter One

The Sources and Analysis

1.1 The Sources

The principal literary sources for the reigns of Valerian and Gallienus are: ‘ *Res Gestae Divis Shapuris* ’ (3rd cent.), Eusebius of Caesarea with Jerome (4–5th cent.), Lactantius, Orosius (375/80–417/8), Zosimus (early 6th cent.), Zonaras (beginning of the 12th cent.), *Synopsis Sathas/Synopsis Chronike* (1241), Cedrenus (11–12th cent), *Historia Augusta* (turn of the 4th century and/or late 4th cent. also known as *Scriptores Historiae Augustae*), Sextus Aurelius Victor (c. 360 ad), *Epitome de Caesaribus* formerly wrongly also attributed to Aurelius Victor (turn of the 5th cent.), Eutropius’ *Breviarium* (c.369 ad), Rufus Festus’ *Breviarium* (c.370 ad), fragments of Herennius Dexippus (a period source from the 3rd cent.), fragments of the Anonymous Continuator of Dio Cassius now attributed to Petrus Patricius/Peter the Patrician (6th cent.), the emperor Julian (4th cent.), Ammianus Marcellinus (4th cent.), Jordanes (6th cent.), Malalas (6th cent.), George Syncellus (early 9th cent.), fragments of John of Antioch (6–7th cent.), and other less important sources. ¹

Despite the large number of these sources, there does not exist any detailed narrative of Gallienus’ reign because we no longer possess the original period sources. It is largely thanks to this that numismatics has assumed a very important role in the analysis of his reign.

It is usually thought that the most reliable of these are the fragments of Dexippus and the Continuator of Dio/Peter the Patrician, and that Zosimus, Zonaras, Victor and Syncellus have also had access to earlier better sources that included Dexippus. The *Historia Augusta* is also known to have used Dexippus, but most historians are very hesitant to use the very unreliable *Historia Augusta* as a source. However, most of these historians have been (and are) still prepared to use it as a source, because it has long been recognized that this text preserves many important bits of information that are missing from the other sources. Despite the fact that I also recognize the dangers in using this source.² I am prepared to accept its information when there are no strong and compelling reasons not to accept it. I do not include here any long discussion of the sources, because those interested in these can consult Geiger, Bray or comments included in the editions

and translations, and because I have presented my philosophy regarding this question in greater detail elsewhere. Here it suffices to note as an example that one should not discard the evidence presented by the *Historia Augusta* solely on the basis that it is the only source for this or because the historian himself/ herself entertains doubts thanks to the limitations imposed by his/her own subjective prejudices. The reasons to dismiss evidence should always be based on the available evidence and not on how one ‘feels’ about the evidence available. A good example of this tendency to dismiss evidence needlessly is to think that the usurpers Saturninus, Celsus and Trebellianus are fabrications (this despite the fact that he is also mentioned by Eutropius 9.8.1 in the wrong context) because these men are mentioned only by the *Historia Augusta*. In my opinion, we should not do this because there did indeed exist usurpers who were quite meaningless and were therefore usually not included in the sources unless there was some particular reason for their inclusion, as was the case for the author of the Thirty Tyrants – he wanted to fill up the figure thirty by including even the most insignificant usurpers together with usurpers from other reigns. A good later example of this phenomenon is the short-lived usurpation of Eugenius, who was a commander of a 500-men “taxiarchy” in Seleuceia and Antioch in about 303. We know of this incident only because Libanius mentioned it and he did that only because his grandfather was one of the persons who became victims of this usurpation.³

In short, there is one important difference between my approach and the traditional approach to these sources, which is that I put far more trust in the veracity of ancient sources than is usually done. History is a source-based art and when there are no strong reasons to suspect the information it should be accepted as likely to be true or something which is as close to the truth as our defective sources would allow us to judge. If we decide to reject some piece of evidence presented in the sources, it should always be based on an analysis of the information known from other sources. The rejection of evidence solely on the basis of one’s own subjective preconceived ideas is not real criticism. It is a travesty of our trade. For example, it is not right to dismiss evidence on the basis that it presents gossipy information regarding someone’s sexual behaviour. If one does so, one is guilty of forcing one’s own hypocritical preconceived view of how it must have been upon the history. It is the historian’s job to tell the audience what the sources tell us about the behaviour of the persons in question and not cover this up solely for the reason that the historian is a prude

himself or herself and wants to entertain the idea that the people of the past were somehow better than us today.

There are, of course, some exceptions to this rule of using only the evidence in the extant sources to reject evidence in some other source. The best example of this is the so-called 'military probability', which has unfortunately sometimes been taken to the other extreme by those who follow the faulty methodology of Delbrück.⁴ These conservative historians usually claim that the late Romans could not field large armies, even when there is evidence that they did.⁵ This sort of faulty approach results from a very limited understanding of the concept of military probability, and also from a completely faulty approach to the sources. These persons do not understand that there have always been small and large scale operations plus anything in between, which required different sized forces. Thanks to their limited understanding they have then used the smaller figures in the sources to claim that the larger figures in the very same sources are faulty! This is a travesty! The source is either trustworthy or it is not! One cannot just pick and choose whatever fits one's own preconceived ideas, such as the armies were always smaller than the sources claim! In actual fact, the armies were usually larger than the sources claim because the sources usually leave out the non-combatants accompanying the army. Funnily enough, it is also very typical for these same persons who follow Delbrück's dated ideas to reject the use of military probability in their analyses of military events and policies. For a complete rebuttal of these faulty dated ideas, see Luttwak's new edition of *The Grand Strategy of the Roman Empire* (2016).

Another good example of the difference in our approach to the analysis of the sources is my approach to the so-called 'supernatural' events. As a rationalist I obviously do not believe in miracles and omens etc., but this does not mean that we should discard the evidence in the sources that present such material, as is far too often being done by ultra-conservative Classicists. It is the historian's job to try to see past the conventions to find out what really happened.

When discussing the Roman sources, we can divide these further into the sources written in Latin and in Greek, and it is possible to make some general comments regarding these. The Latin sources unjustly paint an awfully unflattering picture of Gallienus, because these rely on earlier senatorial sources that were intensely hostile towards Gallienus. In contrast, the Greek sources usually give a more even-handed and positive picture of Gallienus' achievements, but

there are also exceptions to this. For example Julian (probably a descendant of Claudius II) called Gallienus a transvestite in his *Caesares*.⁶ The most positive view of the reign of Gallienus can in fact be found in Eusebius' History of the Church, mainly because Gallienus ended the persecution of Christians. This does not mean that the Greek sources would not include falsifications or mistakes. For example, it is clear that Zosimus has placed some of the wars that took place under Gallienus to the reign of Claudius II. For a fuller discussion of these and other less important sources, see the following narrative with Bray and Geiger.

The following discussion and analysis of the reign obviously builds upon the foundation laid by other historians. I have found the following particularly useful: Brauer, 68–176; Bray; Geiger; Dodgeon and Lieu (notes in REF); Drinkwater (1987; 2007, esp. [chapter 2](#)); Potter, 2004; De Blois; Alföldi; Southern, 2001, 2008. Most of the dates and locations are from Bray. The readers should note that my reconstruction differs, sometimes significantly, from all of these. The surviving sources are so poor and contradictory that several alternative explanations and reconstructions are equally plausible. Therefore, the reader is advised to read these previous studies in order to assess the probability of my reconstruction of the events. The following reconstruction is out of necessity quite speculative, but it has the advantage of being able to reconcile the other sources with the *Historia Augusta* – something that the previous historians have not been able to do thanks to the fact they have not exploited the *Historia Augusta* in the same extent as I have. The sources of Rome's eastern wars have been conveniently collected by Dodgeon and Lieu. I have also consulted the original sources to check the veracity of these.

The main reason for the difference between my interpretation and the interpretation of the previous researchers is that despite the fact that practically all of the historians have made use of the unreliable *Historia Augusta*, I have given this treatise greater value than any of them before me. I have made the *a priori* assumption that it preserves at least a germ of truth behind even those accounts that have probably been invented by the author/authors. These instances include the possibly (but not necessarily) invented letters and other sources. As noted above, in my opinion there is no reason to discard these pieces of evidence solely on the basis that these may have been invented. The reason for this is that everyone familiar with ancient material knows that it was typical for the ancient authors to invent speeches

and put those into the mouths of generals and politicians, and practically all historians still accept that this was used as a means to convey the idea or ideas that the ancient historian thought had taken place on the basis of the evidence he had at his disposal. The possibly-invented letters (it is by no means certain that all of these were invented) should be seen in the same light. The historian has wanted to convey an idea to the readers of what took place by using this literary trick. In other words, I accept the basic veracity of the *Historia Augusta* as a source unless there are very strong reasons to disbelieve it on the basis of other extant evidence. As will be made clear, there are plenty of such instances, but even in those cases it is possible to see how the author has falsified the account and for what purpose, and thereby see the probable truth behind the veil of lies.

In the case of Gallienus, it is widely acknowledged the *HA* has tried to portray his reign in the worst possible light in order to magnify the role of Claudius II, the ancestor of Constantine the Great, while exculpating Claudius of any role in the murder of Gallienus. Therefore, it is quite easy to see how the account was falsified for this purpose. Similarly, it is also because of this and because of literary pretensions that the author (probably Trebellius Pollio) has created a chapter called Thirty Tyrants for the reign of Gallienus. The name has been taken from the Thirty Tyrants of Athens (the literary pretension), while the number of usurpers for the reign has been increased with usurpers from other reigns to blacken the rule of Gallienus.

Most of the historians (especially in the Anglo-Saxon world) used to consider the *Augustan Histories* to be a forgery written in the late-fourth century by some unknown author. This opinion is still supported, for example by Bray and Geiger. However, the most recent research based on computer analysis has demonstrated that this is not necessarily so. See for example the useful discussion in Paul N. Pearson's *Maximinus Thrax* (Barnsley 2016, xxi ff.). These days, practically all historians who deal with events of the third century use the *HA*. Good recent examples of this are Christol, Cizek, Yann Le Bohec, White and Geiger, who are quite prepared to use it as a source for the reigns of their subjects of study, but the readiness to use the *HA* is by no means a new phenomenon – there have always been those who have been prepared to do that and even those who frown on it often use it with caveats. It is now quite clear that it is only the ultraconservative diehards who do not accept the *HA* as a valid source, but fortunately their view is no longer accepted by the newer

generation of researchers. Their approach is already well past its best before date, outdated and about to be thrown into the dustbin of history. In short, I am glad to say that these old ultraconservative dinosaurs are now close to their final date of extinction. Consequently, I accept here as accurate the claim made by the *Historia Augusta* that it was written by six different authors during the reigns of Diocletian and Constantius.

The authors that concern us are as follows:

Author:

Books

Trebellius Pollio

Valeriani Duo, Gallieni Duo,
Tyranni Triginta, Divus Claudius,

Flavius Vopiscus.

Divus Aurelianus, Probus

For the sake of clarity, however, I have used the traditional *HA* to mean all of the authors of the *Historia Augusta* collectively. In addition to this I also abbreviate the names of the books. I also agree with Thomas M. Banchich and others⁷ that it is very probable that the sixth-century Peter the Patrician should be identified as the anonymous continuator of Dio. Consequently, I mean Peter the Patrician when I refer to either of these ‘two’ sources and I also usually use the newest sequence of fragments which can be found in Banchich’s edition.⁸

1.2My Analysis of the Battles

The readers should be aware that in the field of analysis of battles my approach differs significantly from that typically followed up by historians/Classicists because those who have not specialized in military history fail to appreciate its intricacies. There are therefore quite sound reasons for this new approach to the analysis of battles. It is thanks to this that it is possible to take into account for the very first time the period combat doctrine and the so-called military probability. The reason for the adoption of this method is that all organized armies fight in the way they are trained to, which means that it is possible to fill in the blanks in the narrative sources by adding information from the military treatises or from the so-called military probability.

In short, I use the military probability, which includes geography,

rates of march, availability of information, logistical demands etc., and the period military doctrine in such a manner that it is possible to shed additional light on the information provided by the sources. The extant narrative sources give us far too little information regarding the battles fought by Gallienus, but thanks to the fact that there exists some very specific information regarding the battle formations and tactics and also of the matters that were taken into account before committing an army to a battle in the sixth-century *Strategikon* and in other ancient military treatises it is possible to present some likely scenarios of what happened. These are by nature speculative and should be seen as such. Therefore, I will always state in the narrative when the reconstruction is based on an educated guess and include the thinking process behind such guesses. I have included these solely for the purpose of giving the readers a better sense of what is likely to have taken place and why I interpret the evidence the way I have. These portions should be particularly useful for all those who are interested in the peculiarities of period warfare, which include all those interested in third-century history, late Roman history, military historians, and naturally also the wargamers, officers and officers in training.

This speculative portion of the analysis is based on my earlier study of the third century warfare and on the key finding that the Romans were using exceptionally large cavalry armies that operated completely independently of infantry or in such a manner that infantry served only in support capacity. The key pieces of evidence are the wars of Alexander Severus, Maximinus Thrax and Decius. The most detailed evidence for this comes from the sixth-century *Strategikon* which specifically notes that the emperor Decius used the cavalry formations and the tactics described in that treatise during his wars against the Goths. I presented the case for the use of the large cavalry armies about a decade ago in a presentation and in an article dealing with the reign of Decius, the latter of which is included here in a slightly modified form to present the core evidence and also to explain why Valerian and Gallienus became emperors in 253 and what problems they faced and why it is clear that Gallienus did not actually create the first Roman cavalry army but rather re-created a cavalry army that had been lost under Decius.

Chapter Two

Roman Military in the Third Century

2.1 The Background: Roman Society

1

Roman society was a class society that consisted of judicial and social hierarchies. The judicial hierarchy divided the populace into freemen, freedmen and slaves. The free populace was divided into those who had Roman citizenship and those who did not. After the reign of Caracalla most of the free population were citizens. At the very apex of the society were the emperor, the imperial family and the imperial household with its staff that included freedmen, eunuchs and trusted slaves, and the emperor's friends and counsellor including his official body of advisors which was called the *consilium*. The official social categories for the free citizens were the senatorial order, the equestrian order, and the plebs, but in addition to this there existed a new form of class division which divided the people into *honestiores* and *humiliores*. The *honestiores* consisted of the senators, equestrians, veterans, and decurions. They had legal privileges and exemptions from the harsher punishments to separate them from the *humiliores*. The praetorian prefects had the rank of *virī eminentissimi*, the senators the rank of *clarissimus* and the officials of the court the rank of *perfectissimi*. The Senate and senators still expected to be treated with respect by the emperors, even if they had lost their real power ages ago. After all, they still wielded informal power through their wealth and connections.

The civilian and military offices in theory followed the so-called *cursus honorum*. This system reserved certain posts for the members of the senatorial order and others for the members of the equestrian order, so that the very highest posts were the prerogative of the former. However, in practice the emperors sometimes bypassed these requirements and appointed equestrians or even imperial freedmen to the highest offices. Furthermore, the most important military command(s) of the empire, the post(s) of the Praetorian Prefect(s) was/were reserved for a member(s) of the equestrians order. Similarly, the prefectures of the legions in Egypt and of the Parthian legions were officially reserved for the equestrians. This was a sign of things to come. The administrative system with special administration

for the city of Rome and Italy, and the division of provinces into provinces governed by the Senate and into provinces (further divided into equestrian and senatorial provinces) governed by the emperor were also a reflection of the class system.

Agriculture formed the basis of the Roman economy, but in contrast to most of its neighbours the Empire had also very significant artisan and merchant classes. This means that most of the tax income for use by the imperial administration was collected from the peasants through the city councils. It was thanks to this that the Romans were always quite eager to settle foreign tribes within their borders to till the land and to provide soldiers. The emperors could not rely solely on the taxes obtained from the peasants because it varied from one year to another depending on the size of the crops. It was thanks to this that the emperors also tapped other sources of income. These consisted of the produce of the imperial estates and mines, donatives, extraordinary taxes levied when needed, confiscation of the property of the rich with various excuses, such as faked charges, the conscription of soldiers (or its threat to produce money), and tolls and customs (collected from internal and external trade). In fact the customs collected from long distance trade with Arabia, Africa, India and China formed one of the most important sources of revenue for the emperor. Foreign invasions and civil wars which disrupted agriculture and trade were naturally very detrimental for the economy and collection of taxes. It should not be forgotten that the emperors needed money for the upkeep of the imperial machinery and armed forces, the last of which consumed most of the revenue, and they needed the support of the military in order to stay in power. Consequently, if everything else had failed the emperors even resorted to the selling of imperial property and/or on loans or on forced loans from wealthy senators, equestrians and bankers.²

The murder of Alexander Severus in 235 launched a period of tumult and unrest during which the previous assumptions no longer held. Septimius Severus and Caracalla had strengthened the position of the armed forces within society to levels never before seen. With the granting of citizenship to all freeborn men in 212 Caracalla had opened up Pandora's Box. Now all those who had previously been considered foreigners or barbarians could see themselves as Romans. The first person to exploit this was Maximinus Thrax, who murdered his predecessor Alexander Severus in that fateful year. The Roman upper classes were naturally not pleased. The first conservative

counter reaction had already taken place after the murder of Elagabalus. There is no doubt that the government of Julia Mamaea and Alexander Severus meant a return to older traditions. The same can be said of the period when the ultra-rich Gordiani ruled. The problem with this was that the ultraconservative members of the senatorial class and their traditionalist supporters among the senators, equestrians and Italians failed to deliver the successes they promised to the population at large. Gordian III was defeated by the Persians. His murderer and successor the Christian Philip the Arab was one of the reformers, but when he in his turn failed miserably it was once again time for the traditionalists to attempt to turn the ship into the past using ever more forceful means. This backlash occurred under Decius and Valerian, the latter the father of Gallienus.

2.2 The Armed Forces and the Security Apparatus in ca.

AD

250

The Roman armed forces and security apparatus consisted of several different arms of service. The official part of the security apparatus consisted of the land forces (legions, auxiliaries, national *numeri*), the navy, the *vigiles* (firemen/policemen), the *urbanici* (policemen, urban combat troops) and the imperial bodyguard units (*praetoriani*; and *equites singulares augusti/germani*; *aulici/collegia/scholae/protectores*; and *evocati*). In addition to these, the Romans had treaty-bound allied forces (*foederati*) to bolster their armed strength, and land and naval forces provided by the paramilitary civilian citizen militias and policemen.

2.2.1 The Land Forces

Around

AD

250 the Roman land forces consisted of: 1) the forces posted in or near the capital; 2) regular legions (citizens); 3) regular auxiliary forces (citizens); 4) national *numeri* (included citizens and non citizens);³ 5) veterans called for service; 6) urban and rural paramilitary militias; and 7) the allies.

Most of the regular forces (legions, auxiliaries, *numeri*) were posted close to the borders of the Empire to provide a zone of preclusive security for the provinces and the interior. It is possible that these were already known by their Late-Empire name *Limitanei* (HA Pesc.

7.7; Alex. Sev. 58.4). The frontier forces and fortifications along the borders served four strategic purposes: 1) they acted as a deterrence against would-be invaders; 2) the garrisons could be used to engage the enemy in the border region; 3) the garrisons could be used for surprise attacks and for major invasions/ raids; and 4) they gathered intelligence.

In the first half of the third century there appear to have existed two different legionary organizations: the first created in the late-first century and the second by Septimius Severus or by one of his immediate predecessors. The latter is the one described by Vegetius. The standard legions consisted of about 5,120 heavy infantrymen plus the recruits, servants, horsemen and specialists. The legion was divided into cohorts (quingenary 480 men and milliary 800 men), maniples of 160 men, *centuria* of 80 men, and *contubernia* of eight men. Each *contubernium* (tent group/ file in rank and file array) consisted of eight men, one green recruit and one servant so that it in truth consisted of ten men under a commander of ten called a *decanus*. Severus' Parthian legions differed from the above in that these were always commanded by equestrians and had more men. Regardless of the type, all legionaries could vary their tactics. All of them were taught how to throw javelins, thrust with a spear or javelin, use swords and daggers, and how to throw stones and use slings, but only a third of the soldiers could also fight as archers. In addition to this they were trained in martial arts skills and in the use of various tools as ersatz weapons. The amount of armour worn by the legionaries, the type of shield, and the type of martial equipment carried depended upon the mission and unit. Each of the legions had also a cavalry contingent which consisted of 500 to 600 horsemen (but typically a 512-horseman *ala*), all of whom were taught how to use spears, javelins, swords, crossbow, shield and composite bow so that these troops could be used for a great variety of missions. The inclusion of additional specialists such as artillerymen gave the legions great flexibility to perform all sorts of siege-engineering projects and other engineering/building projects. The following lists, which are based on my earlier treatises,⁴ give both legionary variants. In practice, it was rare for the entire legion to march out into combat.

Standard Legion

Probable command structure of the regular legion c. ad90–260

(S) = senatorial office; (E) = equestrian office

–1 Legate (S), until the reign of Gallienus who abolished the office;

or Prefect (E) for the Egyptian and Parthian legions. After Gallienus the commanders were prefects or tribunes (E); commander of the legion.

–1 Laticlavian tribune (S) changed by Gallienus into *tribunus maior* (E); in charge of one cohort and second-in-command of the legion.

–1 *Praefectus Castrorum* (camp, medics, siege equipment etc.) (E)

–1 *Praefectus Fabrorum* (workmen, construction etc.) (E)

–5 tribunes (E), each in charge of one cohort of 480 men.

–1 *tribunus sexmenstris* (in charge of cavalry) (E).

–5 centurions of the 1st Cohort (incl. a *primus pilus*, who could act as *praepositus* for the cohort).

–54 centurions (called *centenarii* by the end of the 3rd century):

–5 unattached centurions who could be detailed for a variety of purposes; these could be used e.g. as acting *praepositi* (commanders for the cohorts à 480 men).

9 x 1 centurion each in charge of two centuries (2 x 80).

9 x 4 centurions each in charge of one century (80 men).

4 cavalry centurions, each with 128 horsemen.

–64 infantry *decani*, one of whom was the *optio*/second-in-command to a centurion (each *decanus* was part of and in charge of their 8 men file/*contubernium*, in addition to which came a *tiro*/recruit and one servant, used for guarding the camp).

–16 cavalry decurions (each in charge of their 32-horsemen *turma*).

–1st cohort 800 men (5 centuries à 160 men) plus 100 recruits and 100 servants.

–cohorts 2–10 = 9 x 420 footmen (including the *decan* 480) plus 60 recruits and 60 servants per cohort.

–496 horsemen (with the decurions 512; Vegetius may have been wrong in adding the decurions to the strength of the *turma*, because the Roman cavalry organization was based on the Greek; however, if Vegetius is correct then these should be added to the total for a total of 512 + 16 decurions plus about 128 servants/squires.

–at least around 715 artillerymen in charge of the 55 *carroballistae* (cart-mounted bolt/arrow shooters) and 10 *onagri* (single-armed stone-throwers).

–10 *speculatores* (formerly scouts, but now couriers, police officers, and executioners).

–*proculcatores* and *exploratores* scouted the roads. It is not known whether these counted as part of the cavalry or were separate from it. In practice the *mensores* could also act as scouts.

–unknown numbers of military police with the title of *stator*, and an unknown number of guard dogs. Inside each camp there was also a police station called a *statio* under a tribune. Some of the soldiers were also used as sentinels (*excubitores*) and there were also other specific guards for various purposes.

–in addition there were unknown numbers of other specialists and bureaucrats, consisting of surveyors, a *campidoctor* (Chief Instructor), a *haruspex* (read the entrails prepared by a *victimarius*), a *pullarius*, *actuarii*, *librarii* (a *librarius a rationibus* worked also for the state post and could act as a spy), *notarii* (could act as spies on the activities of the commander), a *commentariensis* (archivist under a head curator), heralds, standard-bearers, *draconarii*, cape-bearers, trumpeters, drummers, engineers, workmen, artisans, hunters, carters and cartwrights, doctors, medics etc.

–the legates/prefects were also guarded by a unit of *singulares* (both infantry and cavalry), which consisted of detached auxiliaries. (Confusingly, the staff officers in training could also be called *singulares*.) These bodyguards were replaced by *protectores* detached by the emperor from his staff, at the latest during the reign of Gallienus, as a safety measure against usurpations.

–the legion also included beasts of burden (depending on the unit, these could be horses, asses, mules, camels, or oxen).

The Parthian Legions created by Septimius Severus

Vegetius's Ancient Legion (Epit. 2.6ff.) with additional comments in brackets

–1 *praefectus legionis*, formerly *legatus*; commander of the legion.

–1 *tribunus maior*, appointed by the emperor in charge of one cohort (probably the 1st; second-in-command of the legion).

–1 *Praefectus Castrorum* (camp, medics, siege equipment etc.)

–1 *Praefectus Fabrorum* (workmen, construction etc.)

–*tribuni minores* from the ranks (6 tribunes? put in charge of the cohorts and cavalry alongside the *praepositi*).

–5 centurions of the 1st Cohort (Vegetius' list differs from the other known lists of officers and is also 100 men short of the 1100 men he gives for the 1st Cohort).

primus pilus in charge of 4 centuries/400 men (this probably means that there were 440 men, which consisted of 4 centuries each with 110 men).

primus hastatus 'now called *ducenarius*' in charge of two centuries/200 men (probably 220 men).

princeps 1.5 centuries/150 men (probably 165 men).

secundus hastatus 1.5 centuries/150 men (probably 165 men).

triarius prior 100 men (probably 110 men).

–5 centurions for the cavalry.

–45 centurions of the 2nd – 10th COs each in charge of 110 men 'now' called *centenarii*.

–1st Cohort: 1105 footmen (this probably means that there were 720 heavy infantry deployed 4 deep and 360 light infantry deployed 2 deep + 10 *optiones*, 10 standard-bearers, and 5 centurions).

132 horsemen (128 horsemen and 4 decurions; in truth the decurions may have been part of the 128 horsemen in addition to which came one centurion, 2 musicians and one standard-bearer; when trained to do so the 128 horsemen could form up a rhombus so that at each apex stood one decurion).

–2nd – 10th Cohorts: 9 x 555 footmen (this probably means that there were 360 heavy infantry deployed 4 deep and 180 light infantry deployed 2 deep + 5 *optiones*, 5 standard-bearers, 5 centurions).

9 x 66 horsemen (64 horsemen and 2 decurions; as noted above the decurions should probably be included as part of the 64 horsemen; the 64 men could be formed either as a wedge or two rank-and-file oblongs).

–artillerymen (55 *carroballistae* each with 11 men and 10 *onagri* per legion), 'squires', servants and various kinds of standard-bearers and musicians, plus other specialists like clerks, medics, woodworkers, masons, carpenters, blacksmiths, painters, siege-equipment builders, armourers etc. (*aquiliferi*, *imaginarii/imaginiferi*, *signiferi/draconarii*, *tesserarii*, *optiones*, *metatores*, *librarii*, *tubicines*, *cornicines*, *buccinators*, *mensores*, *lignarios*, *structores*, *ferrarios*, *carpentarios*, *pictores* etc.)

–On the basis of my above hypothesis regarding the organization behind Vegetius' figure, it is possible that the overall fighting strength of Vegetius' legion was: 4,400 heavy infantry; 1,100 light infantry; 726 cavalry; at least 660 artillerymen with 55 *carroballistae* and 10 *onagri*; at least 550 recruits left to defend the marching camp together

with the servants and workmen. The extra men on top of the older paper strengths may actually represent the recruits not normally included in armed strengths, but one cannot be entirely sure of that. It is possible that the recruits were also accompanying the legion to combat because Dio's referral to 550 men does suggest this. The obvious problem with Vegetius' information and my reconstruction based on it is that we have practically no evidence to corroborate it, but at least if one presents the information in this manner it does make sense and is therefore plausible. Vegetius notes that the legion could also include several milliary cohorts, which probably refers to the Praetorians, who had milliary cohorts after Septimius's reign, or it refers to the practice of Vegetius's own day to group together different units to form 'temporary legions' that were later called *mere* by the East Romans (sing. *meros*/division).

During this period the auxiliary forces resembled closely the legions in their equipment so that both used typically, but not always, the flat shield, *spatha*-longsword, chainmail armour and so forth. The auxiliary units, both infantry and cavalry, consisted of either quingenary or milliary units but there also existed mixed infantry and cavalry units of these sizes. Some of these units consisted of specialists, but most of these possessed similar flexibility to the legions in that these could be used either as line infantry/ cavalry or as skirmishing forces. There was no uniformity in the size of the unit or type of unit among the so-called *numeri*. As regards the type of equipment and size of unit, the allies (*foederati*) contributed whatever type of force they had available for Roman use so one cannot make any categorization of their types. These, just like the *numeri*, came in various sizes and their equipment was equally varied. The following list (based on my earlier studies) gives an overall picture of the organization.

Approximate size and organization of auxiliary units:

<i>Unit</i>	<i>Foot</i>	<i>Horse</i>	<i>Centuries</i>	<i>Turmae</i>
Cohors Quingenaria Peditata	480		6	
Cohors Quingenaria Equitata	480	128	6	4
Cohors Milliaria Peditata	800		10	
Cohors Milliaria Equitata	800	256	10	8
Ala Quingenaria	512		16	
Ala Milliaria	768 (campaign strength?) 1024 (paper strength?)	24 32		
Numeri (mercenaries)	varied	varied	varied	varied
Foederati (treaty based allies)	varied	varied	varied	varied

The forces posted in or near the capital formed the mobile reserve army at the disposal of the Emperor. The imperial bodyguards consisted at least of the *Praetoriani* (10,240 foot 1,920 horse?), 300 cavalry *Speculatores*, a *numerus* of *Statores Augusti*, the *Equites Singulares Augusti* (2,048 horse), the *Frumentarii* (spies), and the *Peregrini* (spies).⁵ It is also probable that the staff of the Imperial Stables (the *stratores*/ equeuries and grooms, and the *Stablesiani*, under a *Tribunus Stabuli*) also belonged to the cavalry bodyguards of the Emperor during the Severan era, meaning that this unit was not created by Gallienus even if it is still probable that he increased their numbers significantly. The *Evocati Augusti* (veteran praetorians who had been recalled to service) were still another special unit that the emperors used for internal security purposes (probably the ‘centurions’ in the sources). It is possible that these *evocati* were transformed into or renamed the *scholarii* (i.e. were the *aulici/protectores*) mentioned in the following sentence. The ‘Byzantine’ sources (the *Chronicle Paschale*, ed. Dindorf, pp.501–2; and Cedrenus, ed. Dindorf, p. 451) plus the *HA* (*Car.* 5.8, 7.1; *Sev. Alex.* 23.3; *Maximini* 3.5; *Max. et Balb.* 13.5ff.) also suggest that there existed *scholae/collegia/ostensionales/protectores/aulici* during the reigns of Septimius Severus and Caracalla, and that Gordian III and Philip the Arab created two groups of *candidati* to act as personal bodyguards out of the sixth and seventh *scholae*. This means that this bodyguard unit was created at the latest by Septimius Severus, but could also have been created by Commodus or his predecessor. It is possible that we should identify these with the emperor’s ‘Staff College’, which consisted of staff officers drawn from the ranks of the *primipilares*. All of the above units appear to have remained in service until the early fourth century, but in addition to this there were other units of bodyguards whose fate we do not know. These include the *Leones* of Caracalla and the *ala Celerum Philippiana* of Philip the Arab. It is possible that these were incorporated into the *scholae/aulici*, or were reassigned to other missions, or were simply disbanded.⁶

The other units at the immediate disposal of the emperor consisted of the Urban Cohorts (*Cohortes Urbanae/Urbaniciani*, 4,500 policemen usable also as a military force) and the *Vigiles* (7,000 firemen and policemen), both located in Rome, and the *Legio II Parthica* located at Alba (Albanum). Additional Urban Cohorts were housed at least at Ostia, Puteoli, Lyon and Carthage, but it is probable that additional ones existed of which we know nothing. It is also clear that *Urbaniciani* operated throughout the Empire to secure supplies for the

capital on behalf of the Urban Prefect. In addition to the above, the city of Rome always had permanent detachments of marines/sailors from the Praetorian Fleets of Ravenna and Misenum on duty at Rome, which units also accompanied the Emperor during important campaigns. Lastly there were always soldiers on leave in Rome to enjoy the many entertainments of that delightfully decadent city. In addition to this, the emperor could raise new legions out of Italians, but since this was highly unpopular it was not used often.

2.2.2 Combat on Land and Tactics

Roman military doctrine expected that generals would possess first-rate intelligence of enemy activities and organize adequate supplies so that they could pick and choose the time and place where they could engage the enemy in the most advantageous way. The standard Roman combat doctrine had been based on the combined arms concept from the late-Republican era onwards, at least up to the reign of Alexander Severus, who appears to have increased the importance and size of the cavalry forces to never-before-seen levels, but even then one can still say that the standard Roman combat doctrine on land remained the judicious use of all arms of service (light infantry, heavy infantry, light cavalry, heavy cavalry and/or multipurpose troops usable for many purposes simultaneously) for combined and joint-arms operations. Furthermore, his reign was certainly not the first time the Romans had relied on cavalry to win their battles as there are examples of such from the Republican era, but it is still quite probable that it was under him that the cavalry became the dominant arm of service so much in evidence in the campaigns of Decius and Gallienus (see the narrative). Regardless of this, the land forces (legions and auxilia) remained the cornerstone of the Romans' military power and which could be relied on to defeat any cavalry force put against it as long as it had sufficient numbers of disciplined men with high morale.

1. Oblong rectangle array was the standard array, but it was considered unsafe because the length of the line could cause a breach of the line during advance. It was also necessary to post reserves to protect the flanks. Its use was recommended only in such instances where there were enough brave troops to surround the enemy formation on both sides (*hyperfulgentis*).



2. Oblique array vs. enemy's left wing. This version of the oblique array was considered better since the attack was directed against the shieldless side. The purpose was to place the best infantry and cavalry on the right and use them to surround the enemy.



3. Oblique vs. enemy's right wing. Note the wedge shape of the tip of the oblique array. It seems probable that the reason for calling Epaminondas' array both a wedge and oblique has resulted from this. This was considered weaker than the 2nd tactic and its use was recommended only when the left wing was much stronger than the enemy's right. In that case, the commander posted his reserves on the left. The general was also to take special care that enemy wedges wouldn't penetrate the array.



4. The forward-angled array (in Greek *epilampus emprostia*) was used to outflank the enemy suddenly on both sides when he did not expect it. When the army was 400-500 paces away from the enemy, the wings suddenly charged forward to surprise the enemy. This was dangerous tactic, if the enemy managed to hold its own, because the wings were separated from the centre.



5. The fifth formation was an improvement of the fourth. In this array the light-armed and archers were placed in front of the 1st line (*ante primum acie*: this proves that Vegetius' source envisaged the presence of at least two lines). The presence of these protected the centre from the failure of the wings. This tactic was used by Scipio Africanus at Ilipa in 206 BC.



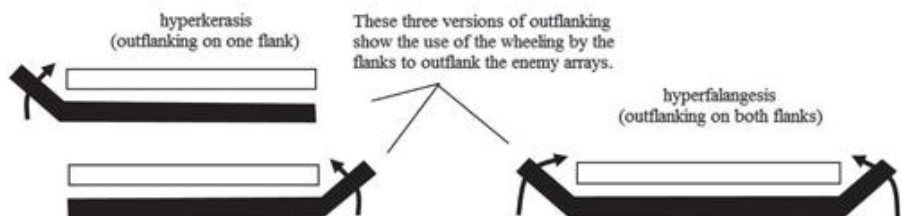
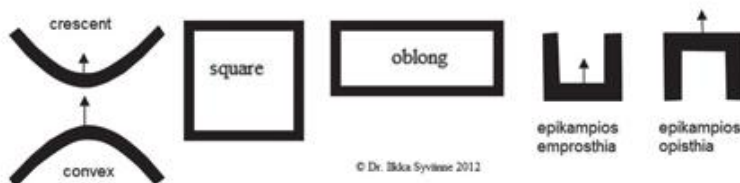
6. Outflanking on one side (*hyperkerasis*). According to Vegetius, this array was the best formation for those who were outnumbered by the enemy. When the army advanced towards the enemy, the general suddenly sent the right wing consisting of his best cavalry and very swift infantry against the enemy, while the remaining part of the army stayed behind and lengthened the line to a straight javelin-like line. This method of attack was often used while on the march (i.e. vanguard was sent against one enemy wing).



7. When the army had fewer men (including cases with fewer brave men), it was possible to even out the odds by resting one wing against a mountain, a sea, a lake, a river, a city, a swamp, or broken ground, and then by placing all the cavalry and light-armed on the opposite wing.

During this era the land forces could be deployed in cohorts (one to four lines) or as phalanxes so that the battle line was usually divided into left, centre and right. The standard ways to defeat the enemy were: 1) to push through the enemy line with deeper formations or with a wedge array; 2) to outflank the enemy on one flank; and 3) to outflank the enemy on both flanks. There were several different grand tactical formations that could be used to achieve these goals. In addition to these the Romans used a variety of defensive arrays like the oblong and hollow square arrays that could also be turned into offensive use. If the enemy had managed to outflank the Romans the standard unit formation was to form a double front or double phalanx to face the rear. The attached diagrams (Vegetius' tactics and hollow square) give a sample of the main grand tactical variants.

simplified versions of the standard infantry battle formations not specifically mentioned among Vegetius's seven tactics

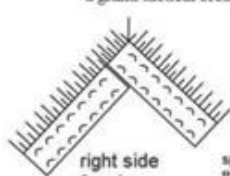


My working theory since 2009 has been that the so-called Italian drill formation of the *Strategikon* for cavalry achieved its final form under Gallienus when he posted a large cavalry army at Milan. The attached diagrams give the main variants of this formation: a first line with units on the wings; a second line with possible fill-up *banda* (flags 200–400 men); and a third line if there were large numbers of men. My own educated guess is that it was the third line/rear guards that were added as a result of the defeat of Decius at Abrittus, because the battle proved that two lines were not sufficient to counter a double ambush such as was deployed by the Goths (see [Chapter 4.1](#)). The standard tactical uses for all of these were: 1) the centre division was used to crush the enemy's centre if the Romans had fewer men; 2) the right wing was used to outflank the left wing if both had the same number of men; 3) the left wing was used to outflank the enemy's right, but this was used less often; 4) both flanks outflanked the enemy if the Romans had more men; 5) ambushers were used against the enemy flanks when possible; 6) the 'runners' (*koursoures* posted on the flanks of each division) of the first line (or less often the entire first line) were used for skirmishing to draw the enemy into a disorderly pursuit; 7) the entire frontline could charge on the double if it was advantageous, for example to avoid showers of arrows; 8) if the enemy defeated any or all of the frontline divisions, the second line protected it; 9) the third line and fill-up *banda* could be used to defend the rear against outflanking; 10) the commander could use his own bodyguards, the third line and fill-up *banda* as his emergency reserves. The combat unit orders were: 1) close order with trot and canter for

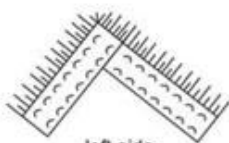
the 'defenders' (*defensores* posted in the centre of each division to protect the *koursors*); 2) and the irregular *droungos*-order (throng) for the *koursors* and any unit that required speed to perform its duties.

Offensive unit tactics and counter-tactics:

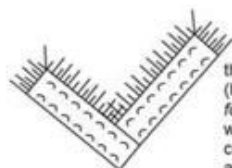
The traditional Greco-Roman wedge consisting of the larger units like divisions deployed to initiate a grand tactical breakthrough



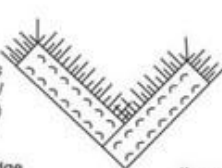
spears show the outer edges of the array



left side forming the apex



the *koilembolos* (hollow wedge) forceps (pincer) was used as a counter-tactic against the wedge



the use of the protruding wedge to initiate a local breakthrough



The Germanic *caput porcinum* (boar's head/*svinfylking*) consisted of 1,100 men (note the 555 men cohorts of Vegetius). The use of this array by the Romans is uncertain for this period. The likeliest date for its adoption is after ca. 267, but if Septimius' new legionary structure reflects also tactical changes, then this array may have been copied from the Germans or invented as a result of the Marcomannic Wars.

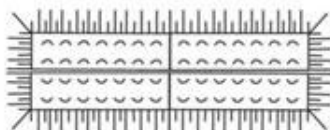
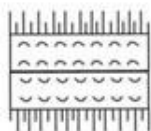


the *serra* (saw) array was used to protect the reorganization of the battle line when it had become disordered: the *serra* meant the use of the crack troops in front of the battle line so that they advanced and retreated to harass and confuse the enemy.



The defensive unit arrays when the enemy had managed to outflank the Romans:

The *amfistomos* (double-fronted) array was used to face enemy when it had outflanked the Romans (left). The Latin name for this array was *orbis* because in practise the array faced all directions simultaneously (right) if there was a need for this.



the *difalanga* array (double phalanx) was used to face the enemy from two directions when there was enough time to form it.



The information provided by the sixth-century *Strategikon* regarding the sixth-century cavalry battle array together with the information regarding its use by Decius in the third century (see [Chapter 2](#)) gives me a unique chance to reconstruct the cavalry battle formations and tactics used during Gallienus's reign.⁷ On the basis of this it is clear that the Romans had three basic cavalry battle arrays

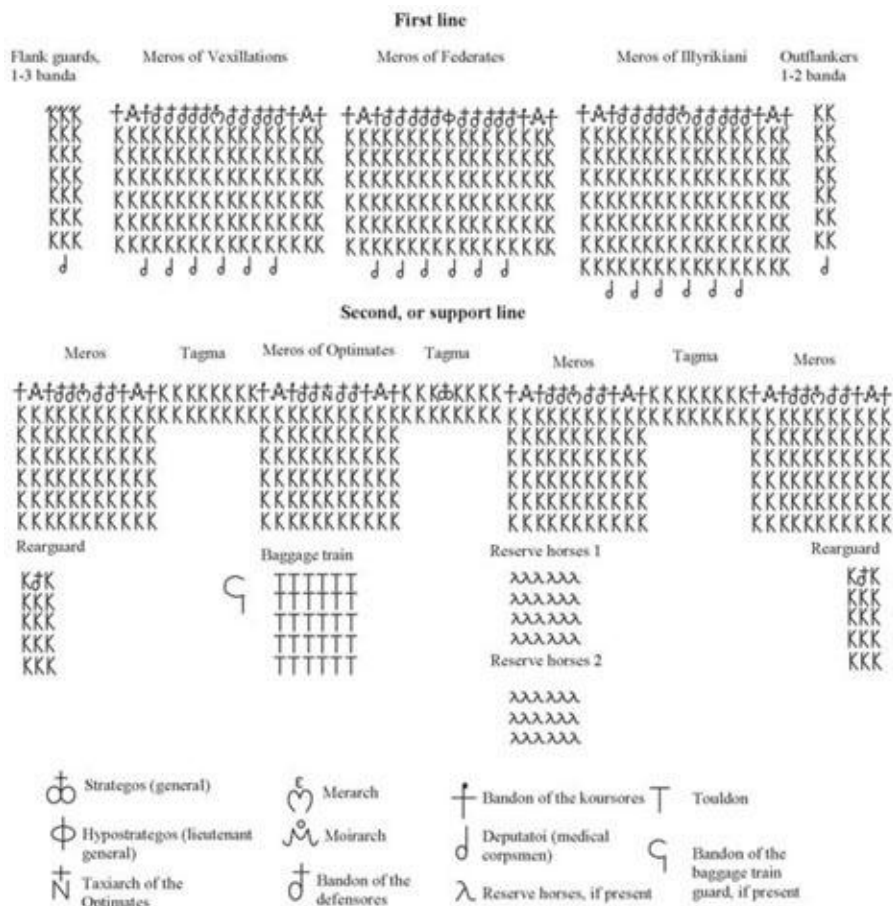
which they used when they deployed their cavalry as a separate army or separately in front of their infantry.

The largest cavalry array for armies in excess of 10,000–15,000 men⁸ had four divisions in the second line; the medium-sized array (15,000/12,000/10,000 and more than 5,000/6,000 men) had two divisions in the second line; the smallest (2,000–5,000/6,000 men or less) had only one division in the second line. Fortunately for us, the *Strategikon* also includes illustrations of the battle arrays, which, together with the information in the text, allows one to reconstruct the battle arrays in great detail. On the basis of the symbols used, the standard version of the largest cavalry array had about 31,000 horsemen, but on the basis of the maximum size it gives for the divisions (*mere*, sing. *meros* 6,000–7,000 men) it is easy to see that the largest envisaged array for the four-division variant had roughly about 50,000 men, but even this was not the maximum envisaged. The *Strategikon* stated that if there were more horsemen than could be included in this array that these were to be deployed separately. My working hypothesis since 2009–2010 has been that these extra men were usually posted as the third line just like in the later ‘Byzantine’ treatises. According to the same treatise, each of the divisions (*mere*) consisted of three *moirai* (‘regiments’, sing. *moira*) each of which had a maximum of 3,000 men. In the standard array, the two flank *moirai* of each division consisted of the *koursores* (runners/skirmishers) that used the highly mobile irregular *droungos*-array when needed, and of the *moira* of the *defensores* (defenders) who used close-order so that they could protect the *koursores* when needed. The *moirai* in their turn consisted of 300–400 men (or 200–400 men; the *Strategikon* has two variants) *tagmata*, *arithmoi* or *banda*. The *Strategikon* considered it unlikely that the cavalry units would have been close to their paper strengths (ca. 500 or 600 men), which meant that the commanders were expected to divide the units that had more than 300/400 men into smaller *banda* and to unite below-strength units to achieve the 200–400 men number. The *banda* etc. in turn were divided into smaller units of approximately 100 men, which were apparently of no importance as battle units.

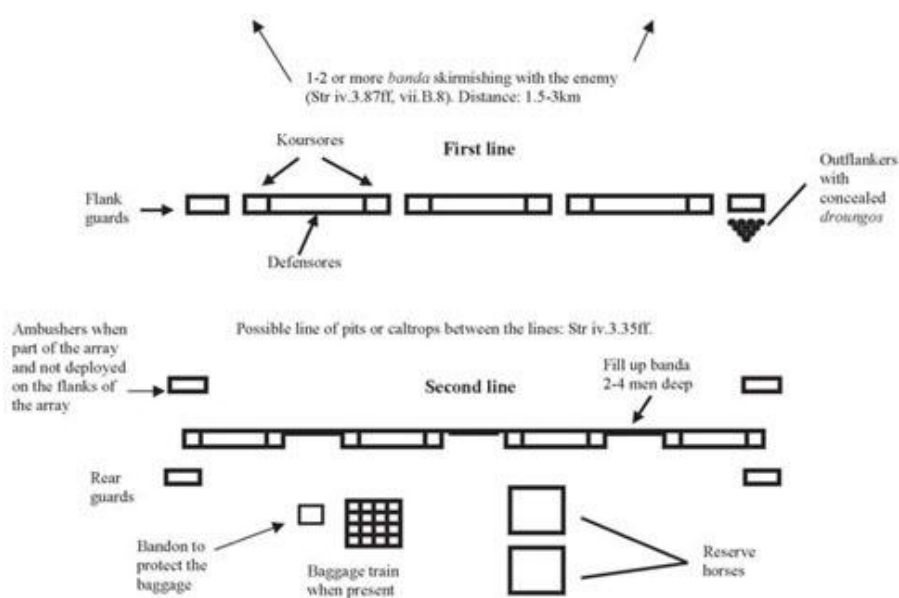
The diagram with Greek symbols has been taken directly from the *Strategikon* and shows the standard battle array as envisaged by the Romans. It shows the diagram of the large cavalry array (the ‘Italian Drill’ formation) in the *Strategikon*. After this follows my reconstruction of the complete version of the large cavalry array

which adds to the above diagram the parts that are mentioned in the text. Both diagrams have been taken from my *The Age of Hippotoxotai*. The Ks (after *kaballarios*) in the diagrams stand for ranks of regular soldiers in formation.

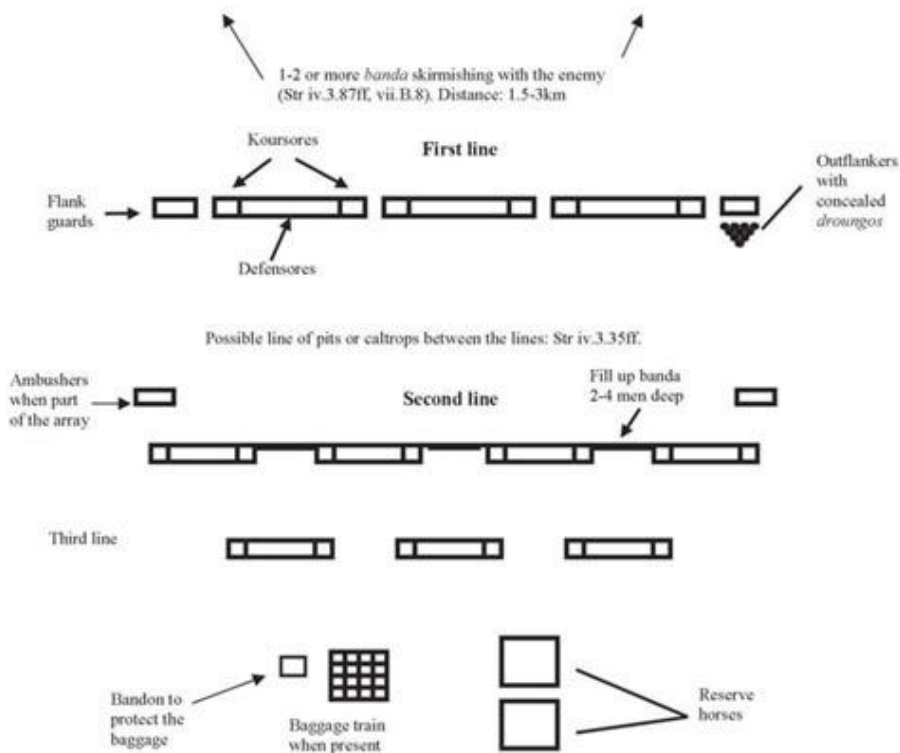
After this follows my reconstruction of the super-large cavalry formation meant for armies in excess of about 50,000 men, which has been adapted from my visiting lecture held at the University of Ottawa in 2010.



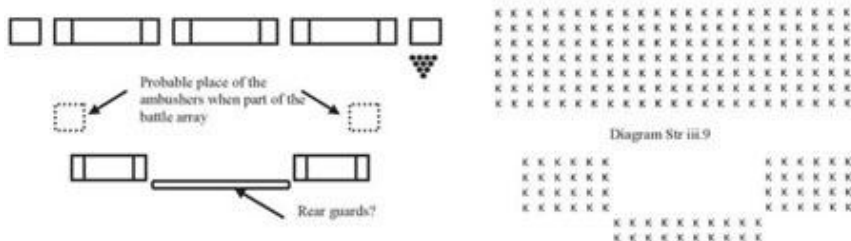
Reconstructed battle array with all its parts:



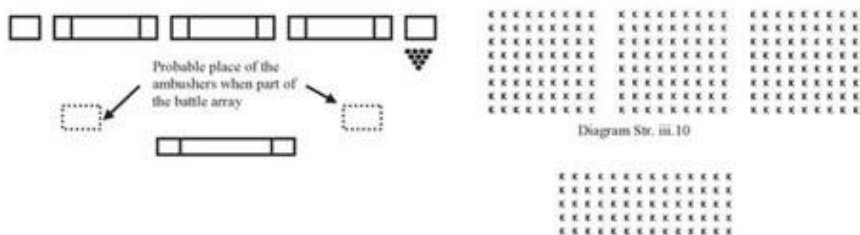
Super large battle array for cavalry armies in excess of ca. 50,000 men:



Medium sized cavalry army with less than 15,000/12,000/10,000 and more than 5,000/6,000 men



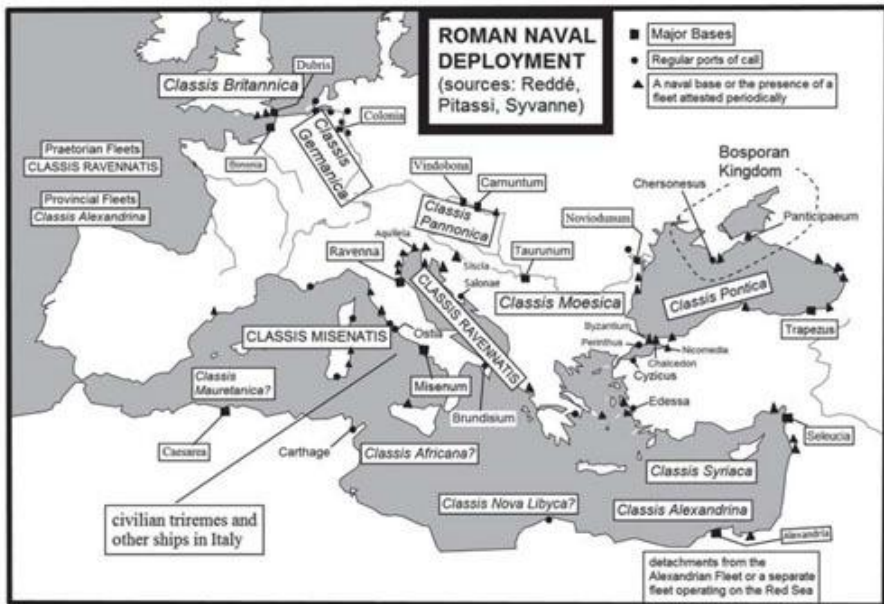
Small cavalry army with 2,000-5,000/6,000 men or less had only one division in the second line



2.2.3 Roman Naval Combat⁹

The Roman Imperial Fleet consisted of two different types: 1) The Praetorian Fleets of Italy; and 2) the Provincial Fleets posted in the provinces. The two Praetorian Fleets, the *Classis Praetoriae Misernatium/Misernatis* and the *Classis Praetoriae Ravennatum/Ravennatis/Ravennas*, were based in Italy, as the names imply. The Provincial Fleets consisted at least of the *Classis Alexandrina*, the *Classis Syriaca*, the *Classis Nova Libyca*, the *Classis Germanica*, the *Classis Pannonica*, the *Classis Moesica*, the *Classis Britannica*, the *Classis Pontica*, the *Classis Mauretanica* (13 *liburnae*), the *Classis Nova Libyca*, and the *Classis Africana*.¹⁰ Each of the Praetorian Fleets had a single naval legion attached to them (Vegetius 4.31), but we do not know whether the Provincial Fleets had legions as well. What appears certain, however, is that the Provincial Fleets had some sort of fighting contingents to man their ships.

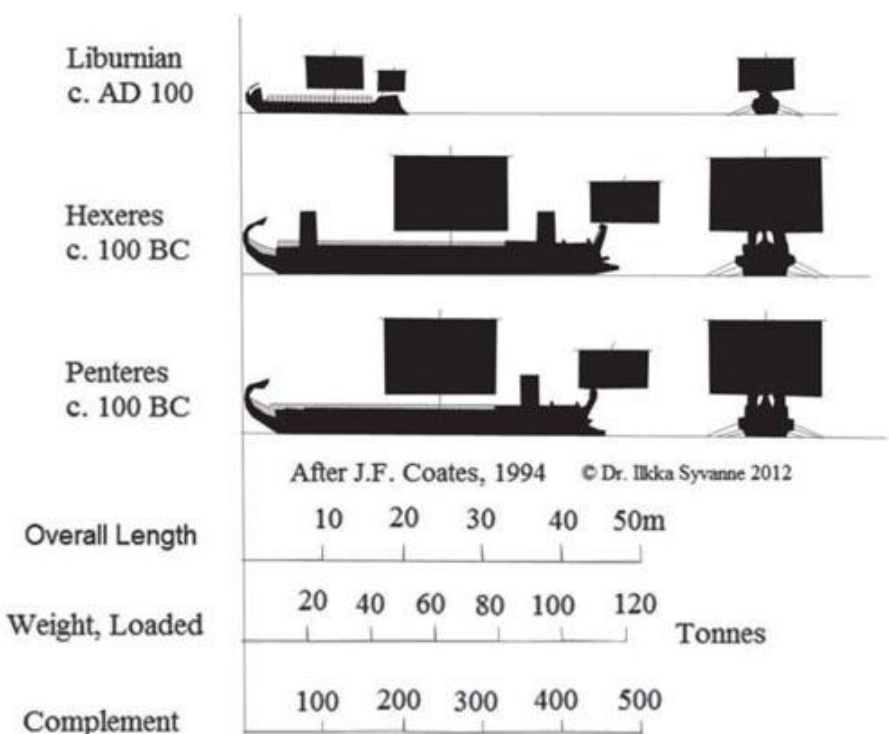
The map below shows the naval deployment in the first half of the third century. The Praetorian Fleets were used as strategic reserves, while the day-to-day defence and protection of the sea-lanes and rivers was left in the hands of the provincial fleets. All of the fleets were also used to support military operations and to ship both men and supplies where needed.



The Romans divided their coastal defence into two separate systems: 1) the passive/ defensive measures (forts, towers, fortified cities and towns along the coasts and rivers); and 2) the active/offensive measures undertaken by the fleets. The basic defence (control of harbours, collection of tolls/taxes, prevention of smuggling and wrecking, guarding of the coasts against piratical attacks) was performed mainly by the civilian police/paramilitary forces, while the active/offensive-defence was mainly performed by the fleets, with the possible help of corvéed civilian ships. Some of the coastal regions also had special officers whose duty it was to protect their section of the coast. During the third century, the Romans still expected the civilians to contribute ships and men as part of their tax requirement whenever so needed.¹¹

The workhorse of the third century fleet was the *liburna* (a fast galley) which formed the core of all fleets, so that the trireme served as a flagship of each prefect of the provincial fleets. Only the praetorian fleets possessed larger ships (mostly triremes with 'fives' and 'sixes' serving as flagships) to make these superior in any possible naval battle with provincial fleets that could be controlled by usurpers. In addition to this, the Romans used a great variety of ships, boats and rafts for all sorts of needs like the transport of horses, men, and supplies, which could be bolstered with corvéed civilian transports or warships.

Ships



Naval Tactics¹²

The Romans usually avoided sailing during the stormy winter season, but by taking a risk they could sometimes attempt to surprise their enemies during the winter. The basis of all naval tactics was to possess a good knowledge of the winds, tides, locale, and signs of weather so that these could be exploited against enemies. Naval combat followed the same principles as on land. It was of the utmost importance to obtain information of enemy plans through spies and scouting boats, and if possible to surprise the enemy with an ambush or surprise attack. Naval battles were usually fought in fair weather because of the limitations posed by galleys. The standard naval battle formations were: a) a crescent formation with the best ships and men posted on the flanks to outflank the enemy; b) a convex array, in which the best ships and men were placed in the center to break through the enemy array; c) a double convex array for greater safety; d) a line abreast with reserves behind; e) a double line abreast for maximum safety if there existed enough ships for that; and f) a defensive circle. These arrays meant the use of two basic tactics by ships: 1) the penetration of the enemy formation with a *diekplous* manoeuvre in which one galley rushed forward into the interval between two enemy galleys which was then followed up by other galleys so that the first sheared

the oars and a second rammed the immobile ship; 2) the *periplous* manoeuvre in which the flank galleys extended their line to outflank the enemy line.

When the battle began the larger ships started it with a bombardment of the enemy with their *ballistae* and bows at the distance of about 300–600 metres. The *onagri*, slings, and staff-slings joined the action at a distance of about 150 m. The *onagri* shot either fire-stones and/or fire-bombs while the *ballistae* shot primarily incendiary arrows. The Romans started to throw light javelins and darts at a distance of about 20–30 metres after which they started to throw heavy javelins. When the ships reached ramming distance, the ships either rammed, or sheared the enemy's oars, or grappled the enemy vessel for boarding. During this period the Romans faced serious naval threats thanks to their neglect of naval forces after the reign of Alexander Severus, and thanks to the emergence of new naval threats in the form of Franks, Saxons, Borani, Goths and Heruls, all of which took place at the same time as the Roman responses were hampered by civil wars. It is no wonder that one of the foci of both Valerian and Gallienus was to rebuild the navy to secure the eastern Mediterranean, and the straits of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles after the defences of the Black Sea had collapsed. The fruits of their frantic efforts become visible only under their successors.

2.2.4 Intelligence Gathering and Security

At the heart of the Roman intelligence gathering systems stood the needs of the emperor. He wanted to ensure his own personal safety against internal and external threats. The personal safety of the emperor was in the hands of his bodyguard units (*speculatores*, *protectores/scholae/aulici*, *evocati Augusti*, *praetoriani*, *equites singulares Augusti*) and other special units (*peregrini*, *frumentarii*, *urbaniciani*) headquartered at Rome that were usually commanded by one to three praetorian prefects. These units were not used only as bodyguards, but also for intelligence gathering and other special missions like assassinations, arrests and interrogation. However, the *frumentarii* and *peregrini* formed the core of this intelligence gathering apparatus, but in practice the emperors could use anyone whom they trusted (for example eunuchs) as their special operatives. The regular military units also performed internal and external security missions so that most of the intelligence gathered across the border was conducted by the units posted along the frontiers. The civilian paramilitary police forces and other civilians could also be used as sources of

intelligence.¹³

2.2.5 Strategy

The general deployment pattern of the Roman forces was defensive. Thanks to the limitations posed by the means of travel at their disposal (feet, horses, wagons, and ships), it was impossible to transfer forces quickly from one front to another to meet an emergency, such as a major invasion. It was thanks to this that the bulk of the forces were posted so close to the border: they were in readiness to interfere across the frontier. The potential enemies were kept divided through a policy of divide and rule. This required a well-functioning intelligence-gathering system to work. If intelligence gathering operations and diplomacy failed and the local frontier forces proved insufficient to meet the enemy invasion, then the Romans usually drew detachments from other legions and units (or entire legions and auxiliary units) from other fronts and dispatched them to the threatened sector. This had the drawback of weakening those sections of the frontier from which these reinforcements were drawn and could result in an invasion of that sector. In such major emergencies the emperors usually raised new legions and other units to meet the crisis. It should still be remembered that the Romans also changed the general deployment pattern when the emperors conducted offensive wars to increase their personal prestige. This gave the Romans the advantage of deciding when and where they fought. In such situations the emperors once again assembled forces from other fronts to their intended area of operations and sometimes also raised new units and formed new alliances. The resulting weakening of other sectors could again result in an enemy invasion so that the initial advantage gained through the offensive could be lost. It was therefore important for the emperors to ensure the safety of other sections of their frontier when they campaigned in person. The power vacuum naturally invited some sort of response, if these were not secured through diplomacy.

The main weakness of the Roman defensive system was that it was always dangerous to trust large numbers of men to any general because they could try to usurp power, but this was necessary in situations in which the Romans faced two or more major enemy threats simultaneously. In fact, the greatest threats to the Roman Empire were the power-hungry generals and not foreign powers. It was because of this that the emperors needed a well-functioning internal security apparatus, which would inform them of the threat of potential usurpations. This information could then be used to

eliminate these potential threats before they actually materialized.¹⁴ Most of the crises, problems and invasions of Roman territory occurred either as a result of civil wars or enemy invasions caused by civil wars.

The strategic goals of Roman foreign and military policies varied according to the personality of the Emperor and his political needs, but they were not always free to choose their own policies and were sometimes just forced to react to the events taking place around them. This was the fate of Gallienus. He had no strategic and operational freedom to choose his own policies. He was forced to act as a fireman who ran from one fire to another while attempting to find the best improvised solution to each crisis he was facing in a constantly changing situation, but it was thanks to these ad hoc reforms and his personal frantic efforts to stem the crisis that the Roman Empire was in a position to restore its fortunes and unity after his death.

This era saw a further refinement in defensive strategy that has usually been claimed to have been invented by Gallienus. This refinement was the posting of garrisons in the interior at strategic locations and choke points. This is not true, even if it is clear that most of our evidence dates from his reign and the evidence suggests that he used the defence in depth approach more than any other emperor before him. The reason for this conclusion is that we already find Priscus with a garrison at Philippolis deep inside Roman territory during the reign of Decius. It has also been claimed that Gallienus created the first real cavalry army. This is also untrue for we find large cavalry forces operating independently for example under Germanicus, Trajan and Decius.¹⁵ However, it is still clear that Gallienus relied more than any of his predecessors on cavalry and that the first thing he did during his reign was to recreate the cavalry army destroyed under Decius.

Regardless, it is still clear that Gallienus created more defensive bases deep inside Roman territory than any of the previous emperors, but he had no other choice as he faced so many simultaneous problems. He fortified a large number of cities both in the frontier zone and in the interior, but some of these fortification projects (such as those in Greece) were independently undertaken by the locals as an emergency response to the situation. Regardless, it is still clear that Gallienus and his staff had analyzed the situation correctly and had as a result of this formed a defensive strategy in which the goal was to give additional depth for the defence in a situation in which the

enemies could not be contained close to the border. Gallienus fortified and strengthened in particular the cities of Trier, Milan, Aquileia, Verona, Lychnidus, Siscia, and Poetovio. Byzantium was a special case. It is probable that Valerian was responsible for the strengthening of Byzantium in about 255/257. It was simultaneously a naval and land base, which was used against the threat posed by the Goths and the Borani in the Black Sea. The fact that the Romans engaged these enemies in this area under Gallienus proves that he maintained a similar concentration of forces in the area. He also seems to have maintained a strong military and naval presence at Cyzicus, the naval HQ of the Black Sea Fleet, because this city was clearly well defended. The concentration of forces in Antioch and Seleucia and the wintering of forces in Lycia-Pisidia by Valerian was not a new phenomenon so one cannot use these as examples of any new policy.¹⁶ (See the narrative.)

However, Gallienus did not forget the needs of the offence. He also strengthened cities right on the border for the dual purpose of providing offensive bases for attacks and of engaging invading enemies from behind with numerically superior forces (these could be collected at these places by using roads running along the border) when an enemy had penetrated deeper into Roman territory. These cities along the borders included at least Cologne, Viminacium, Sirmium and Aquincum. (For further details, see the narrative.)

Chapter Three

The Family of Gallienus

1

Publius (*praenomen*) Licinius (*nomen* = *gens* /clan) Egnatius (*cognomen*) Gallienus (*cognomen* , possibly a nickname/ *signum*) was born in 218 in the same year as Elagabalus became emperor. According to the extant sources he belonged to an old noble senatorial family.

Gallienus's father Publius Licinius Valerianus (c.190/5–260; henceforth called Valerian) belonged to the family/clan/*gens* of the Licinii. The Licinii were originally a famous plebeian family from Etruria that had become members of the senatorial class. There are some who consider the Licinii family connection as a mistake because by the third century there were also slaves and freedmen with the same name, but this is scepticism taken to the extremes. The sources are quite clear that Gallienus belonged to the Roman nobility, full stop. Therefore, it is more than likely that he belonged to the original Etruscan family. Their power base was located at the town of Falerii Novi, which was located along the *Via Egnatii* a short distance from the city of Rome. The family had some unknown connection with Decius who was born in Illyria. What is known is that Decius was married to Herennia Cupressenia Etruscilla, whose home was apparently located at Falerii Novi so that it is possible that Valerian and Decius had met each other in this town. According to Bray, who bases his version on Sir Ronald Syme's conclusions, it is possible that Valerian and Decius were also related to each other. The reason for this conclusion is that there exists an inscription in Lower Moesia which has a name C. Messius Q. Decius Valerianus, which Syme identifies with C. Messius Quintus Traianus Decius. The identification is uncertain, but it does fit the circumstances well because Decius assumed the name Traianus only after becoming an emperor. The reason for Bray's conclusion is that by the third century the Romans were using the *cognomen* to identify the different branches of the original family (*gens*) so that it was possible for Decius and Valerian to belong to the same extended clan even when their *nomina* (i.e. *gentes*) were different. What is known with certainty is that Decius and Valerian trusted each other.

Gallienus's mother Egnatia Mariniana (c.190/5 died before 253) belonged to the Egnatii. Just like the Licinii, the Egnatii were an influential senatorial family. The importance of this family connection is quite clear from the fact that L. Egnatius Lollianus, who was either brother or cousin of Mariniana, was subsequently nominated as the Urban Prefect by Valerian/Gallienus for the year 254. It is also possible that Lucillinus, who together with Gallienus' half-brother held the consulate for the year 265, belonged to the Egnatii. One inscription from the year 257 also shows that Egnatius Sattianus had the title *clarissimus vir*. In short, the family of Egnatii was also influential in the rise to power of Valerian and Gallienus, and they were duly rewarded for their services.

Gallienus was married to Iulia Cornelia Salonina who was also called Chrysogone (born of gold) in coins struck in Ionia and Lydia. Her origins are not known with certainty so many theories have been forwarded by various historians. On the basis of the age of their sons, it is probable that she was born between 220 and 235, but we do not know this for certain.² The *gens* Cornelia was an ancient patrician house of the Republican era, which, according to Smith's Classical Dictionary, was actually the most distinguished of the Republican *gentes*. Once again it would be all too easy to dismiss this as a family name adopted by some freedman in the past but for the fact that it is very unlikely that Gallienus would have been married to any lesser family than another important old senatorial family. It has been suggested that Saloninus/ Salonina derives from the gentile name Salonius, which has possible Etruscan origins, but it has also been suggested on the basis of the name Chrysogone that she was a Greek who came from the city of Nicomedia in Bithynia, where the presence of Cornelii Chrysogonii is attested. None of this is conclusive, but it is still entirely possible that Salonina was born in Nicomedia when her parents were there on some official business. It has also been suggested that Salonina was related to Consul P. Cornelius Saecularis from the city of Salona, which would explain her *cognomen* Salonina. Once again none of this is conclusive. What appears certain is that Salonina belonged to the patrician house of Cornelia and that the marriage was primarily a political one. It was only a happy coincidence that the marriage was also a love union between Gallienus and Salonina.

Gallienus had also a half-brother, Licinius Valerianus, whose mother was Cornelia Gallonia. Unfortunately, it is not known when

Gallienus's mother Mariniana died so we do not know when Valerian married Cornelia Gallonia. What appears probable is that Licinius Valerianus was considerably younger than Gallienus. Even less is known about Cornelia Gallonia. The only evidence for this is a Sardinian inscription. My own educated guess is that the inscription is missing a *praenomen* and that Cornelia should be considered as the *gens* just like it is for Salonina so that Gallienus's stepmother would have been related (a mother?) to Gallienus's wife. It should be noted, however, that there is no definite evidence for this – only my guess which would explain the family relations even better.

It is unfortunate that we know next to nothing about Gallienus's education and youth. However, certain educated guesses can be made. As a member of the Roman upper class Gallienus would have received the best possible bilingual (Latin and Greek) education money could buy. The best proof of this is Gallienus's love of Greek culture. The 'primary school' would have started at the age of seven; the 'school of the Grammaticus' would have started at the age of 11 or 12 and would have lasted to the age of 15; after which followed the 'school of the rhetor'. It is also probable that he was schooled at home under the guidance of a number of private teachers, who were often slaves or freedmen, until the time he was ready to be schooled by the rhetor. He would have been taught to read and write both Latin and Greek, public speaking and poetry with law, mathematics, and philosophy. His later interest in the philosophy of Plotinus and Athens suggests that he was also enthusiastic about philosophy. Bray suggests that Gallienus may even have studied at Athens. It is clear that in addition Gallienus was given a military education which included riding, running, swimming and the use of various types of weapons. This part of the training included the reading of historical works and also possibly some military treatises – the reading of these formed part of the regular curriculum (e.g. as reading material to teach language and philosophy).

I agree with Bray that it is probable that Gallienus and Valerian fought on the side of the Roman Senate in 238 against Maximinus Thrax because Gallienus would have been about 20 years of age at the time. It is also probable that Gallienus followed the senatorial *cursus honorum*, which included both civilian and military offices, even if it was in disarray by the third century. It is practically certain that Gallienus would have had some military commands during the period 238–253 because he was so well qualified for the job after becoming

emperor. It is therefore quite possible that he took part in the ill-fated Persian campaign of Gordian III and/or in the Balkan wars against the Carpi and Goths. Considering the high position of his father Valerian it is possible that he served under his father whenever Valerian had military commands, such as governorships.

It is probable that Gallienus exhibited some of the behaviour for which he later became so famous, which included the frequenting of brothels and bars. This sort of behaviour was quite typical for soldiers who faced the very real prospect of dying in combat. This supports the same conclusion as was discussed above. In my opinion, it is also very probable that the marriage of Gallienus and Salonina took place late in life due to his military service and behaviour: Gallienus's duties elsewhere and his loose living would have postponed the marriage. There is also another reason for this conclusion, which is that the children of the pair appear to have been sired in the late-240s or 250s. Geiger estimates that P. Licinius Cornelius Valerianus was born c. 246/250, P. Licinius Cornelius Saloninus Valerianus in c.248/52 and the third son Licinius Egnatius Marinianus even later in c.258. What is certain is that all of them were underage when they were made Caesars. According to Geiger, on the basis of a *fecunditas*-coin, it is probable that Salonina bore still another son in c.265. To me this suggests that the marriage took place in c. 245–248, possibly at about the same time as Valerian married his second wife who may have been related (a mother?) to Salonina. As I have noted above, we do not know how old Salonina was at the time of her marriage. She could have been quite young (e.g. 15–18) or a spinster by the standards of the day if she had just stayed unmarried like some upper class ladies chose to do, or a widower if she had been married before. My own educated guess is that she would have been about 18–20 at the time of her marriage because she had so strong an influence on her husband. This suggests some maturity.

The following drawings of Piranesi and Cohen show: Gallienus' parents Valerian (Valerianus) and Marianiana; Gallienus and his wife Cornelia Salonina and two of their children, Saloninus and Valerian Jr. (Valerianus). Additional images of the persons can be found in the plates and text.



Far Left: Gallienus
(source: Bernoulli)
Top Left: Valerian Sr.
Below Left: Mariniana
(Source of coins:
Cohen)



Top Left: Cornelia Salonina.

Top Right: Valerianus Jr. with Valerianus Sr.
and Salonina with Gallienus. Valerianus Jr.
was probably killed by Ingenuus.

Below Right: Valerianus Saloninus who was
murdered by Postumus.
(Source of coins: Cohen)



Chapter Four

The Riders of the Apocalypse: The Disastrous Years of 249–253 and the Rise of Valerian

4.1 The Reign of Decius: The Great Dragon and Precursor of Antichrist

AD

249–251

1

Decius usurps power

In 249 ad Decius raised a flag of revolt in the Balkans where he had been sent by the emperor Philip the Arab. The reason for his appointment had probably been the baptism of Philip the Arab into the Christian Faith, which meant that he was henceforth unable to pursue military glory in person.² However, Decius' revolt forced his hand and he had to march against Decius, but to no avail, since the latter defeated and killed him in the Battle of Verona.³

Decius' internal policies

After being reaffirmed by the Senate in Rome, the ultraconservative Decius immediately set about changing the policies of his predecessor, whom he had clearly hated intensely. He wanted to reunify the empire by a very great leap into an idealized Roman past. He issued a series of coins commemorating his deified predecessors. He initiated public building projects to glorify Rome. He also saw himself as the restorer of the ancient Roman republic and therefore held the consulship every year. However, most of all he wanted to restore the ancient Roman religion. He issued an order that all his subjects were required to sacrifice to the traditional Roman gods and thereby show their loyalty to Rome and the emperor. The citizens, Christians included, were required to perform the sacrifice by a specific day and receive a certificate to show their obedience or face the consequences. This resulted in the first great persecution of Christians since the dark days of Nero.

Decius also assumed the title *restitutor sacrorum et libertatis*. There were evidently many reasons for this declaration. Firstly, he wanted a return to the old Roman ways and wanted to revive the old traditional

gods and public demonstrations of piety and loyalty. Secondly, as a usurper he also needed to legitimize his position. Thirdly, he may have wanted to ease the unease resulting from the passing of the millennium.⁴ And fourthly, he hated Christians and Christianity. It is in this context that one should see the story of the appointment of Valerian as censor in the *Scriptores Historiae Augustae* (Val. 5.4–6.9).⁵ Decius had already shown his hostility towards the Christians during Maximinus' reign. Contrary to other conservative senators like his friend Valerian, Decius had stayed loyal to Maximinus till the bitter end, even after the Senate had declared Maximinus an enemy of the state. Maximinus had two things that spoke in his favour in the mind of this ultraconservative senator: Maximinus also hailed from the Balkans and one of his first actions was to initiate a persecution of Christians. Decius' hate of the Christians seems to have been so great that he was even ready to overlook Maximinus' low barbarian birth.⁶

The Balkans

The removal of forces from the Balkans by Decius for his march on Rome to usurp the throne invited a host of problems. Now the Balkans lay open for the simultaneous invasion of the Carpi and Goths, who were boiling to take revenge over the failure of Philip the Arab to pay the agreed subsidies (see the maps). The Goths were led by the famous Kniva. Decius assumed the name Trajan and prepared to march against the Carpi and Goths. The name Trajan recalled the exploits of the great *optimus princeps* in Dacia. The name was well-chosen because the Carpi were probably so-called Free Dacians. It was also suitable because Trajan had also been a persecutor of the Christians. Decius' first reaction was to send his eldest son and Caesar Herennius with troops to reinforce the army of the Danube, while he himself attended to the matters of the state. His intention was to follow his son as soon as possible.

Before Decius himself could leave Italy, he had to take care of other urgent matters. In Gaul there was a civil war (Europius 9.4), which may have been initiated by Marcus Silbannacus (see 4.4.). Whatever the cause, it was suppressed. And then there was the question of who would rule the city of Rome in his absence and in the name of his other son the Caesar Hostilian. Consequently, he ordered the Senate to choose a censor from amongst its ranks to restore the old ways and also to put into effect Decius' decree of the empire-wide demonstrations of public sacrifices to the Roman gods and himself. In effect, the censor was also put in charge of the persecution of the

Christians. According to the *HA* (*Valerian* 5.4ff.), the Senate chose the future Emperor Valerian (P. Licinius Valerianus) as censor. Decius had undoubtedly hinted to the speaker of the Senate who his preferences were before the session of the Senate. Consequently, Decius left his son Hostilian in the good care of Valerian. Now in the absence of the emperor, Valerian was put in charge of the census, taxation and public morale. In this role he persecuted the Christians mercilessly and thereby also enriched the state coffers.

The East

There was also trouble brewing in the east. A certain Myriades/Cyriades,⁷ who was a member of the city council of Antioch, was expelled from the city because he had embezzled money. According to the *HA*, he robbed his father and fled to Persia. There he managed to persuade the king Shapur that the time was ripe for an invasion. The persecution of the Christians by Decius and Valerian at this time was very unwise because most of the Christian population lay in the east and this could now readily be exploited by the Persians. The Persians were persuaded and invaded. Myriades acted as an advisor to the crown-prince Hormizd-Ardashir, who evidently achieved considerable success in 250–251 because next year Shapur decided to invade in person. As a result, Decius or his successor Gallus seems to have issued an order for the Roman army of the East to assemble at Barbalissos during the winter of 251–252 for the forthcoming war. Decius may even have sent reinforcements to the east and thereby weakened his army just before the decisive engagements of his own war. At least, he appears to have sent the German cavalry guards of Caracalla, the Gothic Lions to the east.⁸ It was not wise to use the Goths against other Goths. However, Shapur acted first and benefited from the chaos and from the unwise policy of persecution.⁹

The Gothic Menace

Meanwhile, in 250 ad, the Goths under their king Kniva had begun the invasion of the Balkans. Kniva's army seems to have consisted of the Goths, Dacian Carpi, Bastarnians/Peukesians and Vandals.¹⁰ According to Jordanes (*Getica* 101), Kniva divided his army into two parts and sent some to ravage Moesia (= Moesia Superior) that lay undefended through neglect.¹¹ The army sent to Moesia had two purposes: 1) it ravaged defenceless lands; and 2) it acted as a shielding force against any possible relief/reinforcements sent from Italy. The invasion of Moesia was probably helped by the fact that there appears to have been Gothic and Alan auxiliary troops in the area that would

not necessarily have fought against their fellow tribesmen.

Other modern historians such as Wolfram (p.45) have also suggested that the Carpi and their allies were simultaneously directed against Dacia. This is by no means impossible. Some of the allies may indeed have exploited the opportunity and thereby tied up even more Roman resources elsewhere. The main force of 70,000 men under Kniva, however, advanced first against Novae in Moesia Inferior (see Maps.) On the basis of the fact that the later separate Gothic tribes had 12,000 to 15,000 horsemen each, this force must have included at least some 25,000 to 30,000 horsemen, if not more. On the basis of the combat tactics used by the Goths they, in fact, appear to have used only cavalry, which suggests that the vast majority of the invading force probably consisted of mounted men. Contrary to the modern tendency to underestimate the size of the invading barbarian forces, I do not consider this figure to have been in any way impossible if we take into account the number of tribes and peoples involved (most of eastern Europe) and the need to be able to overwhelm the Roman cities and their garrisons with a force that lacked adequate siege trains and sophisticated siege techniques.¹² Therefore, it is no great wonder that the governor of Moesia Inferior, Trebonianus Gallus, was able to defend the city of Novae with his army successfully. Consequently, Kniva moved on and marched towards Nicopolis with the intention of proceeding from there to the Shipka Pass and through it to Thrace (Jordanes, *Get.* 101–103). According to Syncellus (AM 5746), before reaching and sacking Nicopolis the Goths surrounded the Moesians who were trying to flee to the city, which may suggest a grand tactical encircling as used by the nomadic cavalries on the steppes - for example during their large scale hunts. (See the Map of Nicopolis on p.xix with the Map of the Balkans and the road from Nicopolis to Beroe on p.xvi).

It is indeed notable that the Gothic Confederacy possessed enough warriors to be able to move about in the Balkans without the Romans being able to do anything about it. However, by now the emperor Decius had reached the Balkans. According to fragment 23 of Dexippus' *Scythica* (Müller 676ff., esp.677), Decius defeated the Goths at Nicopolis, which means that he had managed to reach the scene only after the Goths had already sacked the city. The *Strategikon* (4.3.12ff.) states that Decius' success had resulted from the use of feigned flight and cavalry. In other words, Decius had at his disposal a very sizable force consisting of cavalry of almost comparable size to

that of the enemy. It should be stressed, though, that the use of a feigned flight suggests that Decius had fewer horsemen than the Goths.

The fact that the Goths were defeated at Nicopolis means that there are two alternative interpretations for what happened. Firstly, it is possible that Decius had defeated the second of the enemy divisions before reaching Nicopolis and that he now defeated the main force under Kniva. Secondly, it is possible that Decius defeated only the second division, the shielding force, so that Kniva was able to retreat through the Shipka Pass with his main army. Whatever the truth, it is clear that the Goths were already approaching Philippopolis very soon after their defeat at Nicopolis. The same fragment also shows that Decius was afraid that the 'Thracians' (i.e. the Thracian field army) would not wait for the arrival of his army and would engage the Goths. The other worry in the mind of Decius was clearly that the soldiers posted at Philippopolis would declare Priscus, the governor of Macedonia and Thrace, as emperor. Consequently, he sent a letter to Priscus in which he urged the defenders to remain inside the walls and wait for his arrival. It is therefore clear that, whether Decius had defeated Kniva's main army and not just the shielding force or not, Kniva was still able to retreat to the Haemus range and through the Shipka Pass to threaten Philippopolis.

However, Kniva's intention was actually to lure the enemy into following. The elated and overconfident Decius swallowed the bait and followed on the double, possibly fearing that the soldiers posted at Philippopolis would revolt. When Decius reached Beroe his army was exhausted and he had to rest his army and horses. It was at this precise moment that Kniva and his Goths attacked him like a thunderbolt from heaven. The Roman army was cut to pieces and Decius was barely able to flee through the Shipka Pass back to Moesia, where Gallus was still guarding the frontier. According to Dexippus' version, preserved in Syncellus (AM 5746), Decius was defeated in a battle despite having killed 30,000 Goths. If there is any truth to the figure, it must refer to the casualties suffered by the Gothic shielding/raiding force previous to this and not by Kniva, but it is still more likely that we should put this casualty figure in the same category as the other so-called achievements of Decius: pro-pagan Roman propaganda. If it refers to the Roman casualty figure, it is far more believable because it coincides roughly with the size of the standard large cavalry army.

After his crushing defeat, Decius began hastily to collect together whatever forces there were in the area while the Goths proceeded to ravage Thrace.¹³ Decius also named his son Herennius 'Augustus' in order to canvas support for his badly-failing cause. As a result of Decius' defeat, the senator Julius Valens Licinianus proclaimed himself emperor in Rome, but his revolt was soon squashed, probably by Valerian.¹⁴

In the probably-fictitious letter from Decius to Messalla the governor of Achaëa (who is otherwise unknown), the *HA* (*Claud.* 16) claims that at some point in time during the Gothic war Decius dispatched the tribune Claudius to take command of the defence of Thermopylae and Peloponnesus where he would receive reinforcements from Dardania,¹⁵ consisting of 200 *milites* (foot soldiers, probably legionaries), 100 cataphracts, sixty regular horsemen, sixty Cretan archers, and 1,000 well-armed new recruits. It is usually thought that all of this must have been invented by the author (Trebellius Pollio, according to the text). However, in the absence of any definite evidence to the contrary, I have here accepted this. It is by no means improbable that Decius would have dispatched a person belonging to his retinue to take command of the defence of Thermopylae in particular.¹⁶ There were two chokepoints that could be used to block the route of the invaders, the Pass of Thermopylae and the Isthmus of Corinth, both of which needed defenders for this purpose. The information provided by the *HA* is therefore quite probably true. It is unfortunate that we do not know the exact timing of the dispatch of Claudius to take command of the defence. It is possible that he had already been dispatched across the Adriatic before Decius took charge of the operations in person or shortly after that, for example after the defeat suffered near the Shipka Pass.

In the meantime, the Goths advanced against Philippopolis (modern Plovdiv) and put it under a siege (see map on page xix). According to Jordanes (*Get.* 102–3), Kniva took the city of Philippopolis after a long siege and allied himself with the governor of Thrace, Priscus. In light of the fact that Priscus was himself at Philippopolis (Dexippus, *Scyth.* fr. 23), it is probable that Kniva promised Priscus his support if Priscus declared himself emperor, with the result that Priscus opened up the gates only to find out that he had been duped by the wily barbarian. What is certain is that Priscus disappears from the pages of history after the taking of the city of Philippopolis by the Goths. In other words, it is likely that Priscus

proclaimed himself emperor immediately after the defeat of Decius at Beroea, and then tried to save his skin by allying himself with the Goths. Priscus' presence in Philippopolis suggests that before Decius had marched to Rome, he had deployed his forces in depth and had so posted some forces (possibly parts of the *Legio V Macedonica* with auxiliaries) at Philippopolis (see the Maps of the Roman Empire on pp.xiii–xiv). In other words, this arrangement suggests the use of defence in depth.

After the Goths had sacked the city, they were ready to begin their homeward trek. Since the sources do not specify the direction taken, this leaves open the possibility of the use of three alternative routes: 1) the Goths could have retreated via Serdica to the north and then east along the Roman road until they reached the road passing by Abrittus; 2) the Goths could have used the same route as previously via Beroe, Nicopolis and then east until they reached the Abrittus road (this is unlikely as they had previously pillaged this area); or 3) the Goths could have moved east and ravaged Thrace before moving north (see the map of the Balkans on page xvi). The wagons of the Goths were laden with spoils of war and their marching column was full of hapless Roman captives.¹⁷

Decius decided to engage the retreating Goths in combat. He had no other alternative. Either he would win or he would lose his life, either in defeat or because the soldiers would not tolerate failure. He decided to engage the Goths when they were retreating back home and hindered by their booty, which was later to become a favourite defensive strategy in Vegetius, the *Strategikon* and the *De Velitatione* in situations where there were initially not enough men to engage the enemy in combat. This is actually the method that Decius should have used from the start. However, before the battle proper, Herennius, the son of Decius, pressed an attack too boldly, with the result that the retreating Goths slew him with an arrow,¹⁸ which suggests that Decius was using his cavalry to weaken the Gothic force with skirmishes before the actual intended engagement with the main force. After the death of his son Decius is said to have cheered his soldiers by saying: 'Let no one mourn because the death of one soldier is not a great loss to the republic'.¹⁹ However, in truth he was unable to bear the loss of his son. This gave the crafty Kniva his opportunity. He lured the incompetent, grief-stricken Decius and his army into a well-prepared trap at Abrittus.²⁰

The supposed treacherous role of Gallus in the death of Decius

mentioned by sources such as Zosimus is pure pro-pagan, anti-Gallus propaganda after the fall of the latter. Kniva simply outsmarted the Roman emperor and his staff of officers. According to Zosimus 1.23, Kniva divided his army into three divisions and placed the first division behind a marsh. Before the battle Decius set up an altar and sacrificed to the gods. The ultraconservative Decius may even have emulated the famous Decii of old and devoted himself to ancient Roman Gods before he charged, as suggested by A.R. Birley and R. Cowan.²¹

According to Zosimus, when Decius had destroyed most of the first Gothic division, the second detachment attacked, which detachment he also defeated before the third division appeared near the marsh. Decius proceeded to attack this division too, and galloped into the swamp where he and his army were assailed simultaneously from all sides. Decius and his army were killed to a man. The *Strategikon* explains the events of the battle even better:

The troops are lined up in front of the swamp and, when the action begins, they feign flight, heading over the passageways, and lead the enemy to fall right into the swamp. Then the troops in ambush on the flanks suddenly charge upon them, and the men feigning retreat overpower and destroy the enemy. The Scythian tribes of the Goths used this against the Roman emperor Decius when they crossed the Danube and invaded Thrace and waged open war against him around Moesia (251 ad). Up to that time Decius himself had been successfully employing the same strategy, simulated retreat, in intensive warfare which enabled him to destroy many of them. (*Strategikon* 4.3.12ff., tr. by G.T. Dennis 53–4)

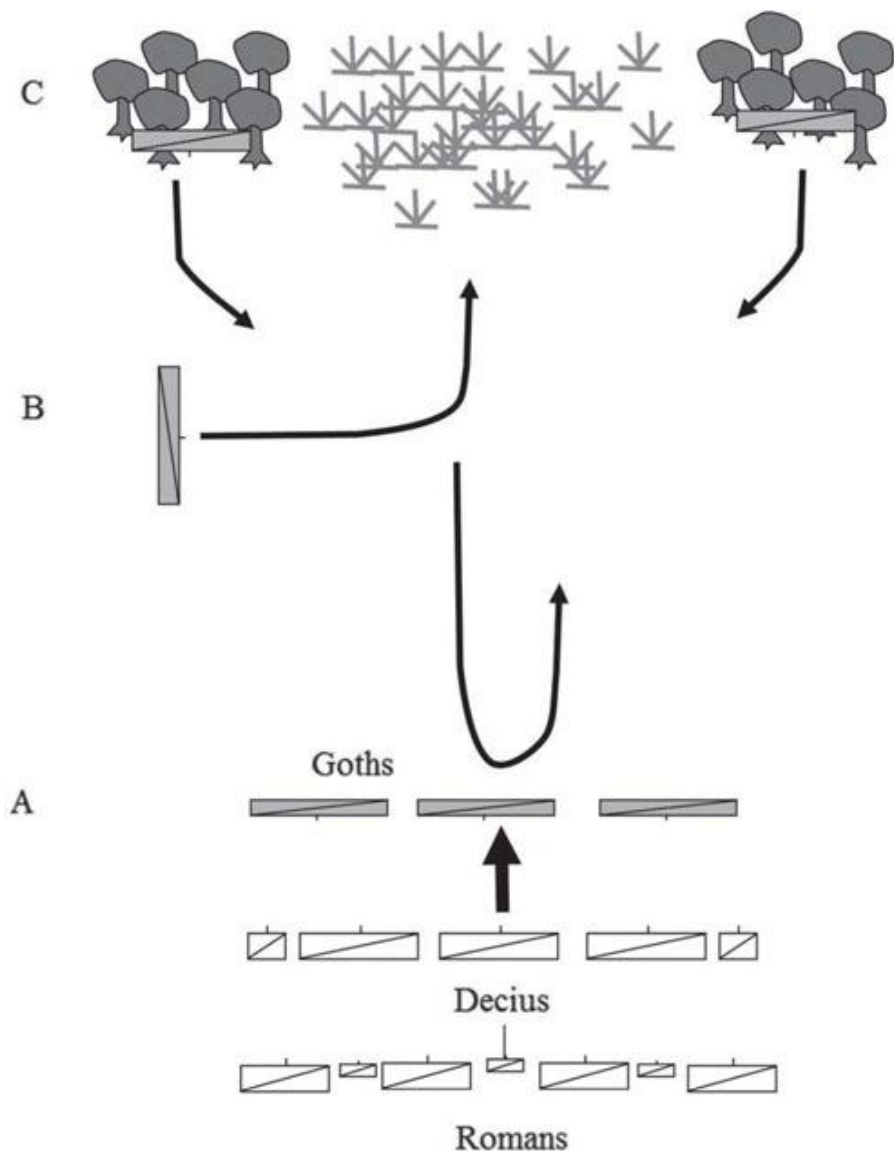
On the basis of Zosimus and the *Strategikon*, it is therefore quite clear that the Goths had divided their cavalry army into three divisions, two of which were used as baits. This very same tactic was to become one of the standard ambushing methods of the Byzantine Empire as the emperor Phocas' *De Velitatione* makes clear. The Goths used the first ambush to remove the Roman reserve by forcing it to gallop forward to protect the first line. It was then that Decius and his staff made their fatal mistake. They did not understand that the Goths were using a double ambush. Consequently, when Decius then galloped after the retreating Goths into the swamp he did so with abandon and paid the ultimate price (see the diagram).

The Battle of Abrittus 251

AD

The first Gothic division **(A)** feigns flight and leads Decius to the first ambush **(B)** where the Goths have hidden their second division. Decius leads his support line forward to protect the ambushed first line and begins a reckless pursuit up to the second ambush **(C = the main ambush)**.

The diagram shows only the main features of this double ambush and is not in scale. In actual scale the double ambush would have spanned the distance of several miles/kilometres from one ambush to another, and the first ambush **(B)** would also have been hidden in a valley or woods or similar place to give the Gothic ambushers some cover.



The Disaster that was Decius

What is particularly notable about the campaigns of Decius and Kniva is that both were using very sizable cavalry armies well before these had supposedly been used by either parties. In fact, what is particularly remarkable is that Decius employed a cavalry army well before its supposed creation by Gallienus. This begs the question, when was this cavalry army created? The best educated guess is that it was created during the reign of Alexander Severus, who is known to have recruited eastern mounted archers, in particular Parthian refugees together with Armenian and Oshroene cavalry, for his

German campaign (*HA Sev. Alex.* 61.8; *HA Maxim.* 11.7ff.; Herodian 7.2.1). On the basis of this it is clear that the Iranian cavalry forces served as the principal source of imitation. In fact, we can see this cavalry force in action under Maximinus Thrax, who defeated the Germans with them. It is probable that the Romans recruited new reinforcements from the east during the eastern wars of Gordian and Philip, and that Philip took a sizeable portion of these forces with him when he marched back to Rome. The end of this force came with Decius, who squandered the first real Roman elite cavalry army at Beroe and Abrittus. It was left for Gallienus to rebuild this cavalry reserve army by recruiting a new army of horsemen, his famous *Equites*. I have also suggested in two research papers in 2008 that the Italian Drill and therefore the Italian Formation was probably created by Gallienus as a response to this disaster. In fact, it is not impossible that Gallienus or someone else at the time may have written a military treatise which detailed the reasons for Decius' death as a warning example and that Maurice had copied it verbatim.

4.2The Reign of Gallus (ad 251–253)

After the death of Decius, the soldiers proclaimed Gallus emperor. However, in the aftermath of the disaster, Gallus could do little against the victorious Goths. Consequently, he allowed the Goths to retreat with their booty and prisoners and even promised to resume the payment of subsidies to them. After this he marched to Rome to secure his accession. Gallus sought reconciliation rather than confrontation. Consequently, perhaps unwisely, he did not begin his reign with a purge of Decius' family and supporters. It was to prove his own undoing. Instead, he adopted Decius' son Hostilianus and appointed his own son Volusianus as Caesar alongside him. He also continued the persecution of Christians begun by Decius. Unfortunately for him and the Italians, Gallus' army had also brought with them the plague. He did his utmost to assist the victims by providing proper burials, even to those who could not afford them, and thereby gained the goodwill of the populace. This move was undoubtedly not done solely on altruistic humanitarian grounds: Gallus and his advisors undoubtedly knew that the only way they could try to halt the progress of the disease was to bury the dead as fast as possible. However, very conveniently for Gallus, the plague also claimed Hostilianus in August 251, if it can be trusted that Gallus had not poisoned him. The fact that Gallus had ordered the *damnatio memoriae* of Decius and his family as early as July and Hostilianus

died in August suggests that Gallus probably had a hand in the death of Hostilianus.²² Furthermore, it is possible that Gallus removed Hostilianus' guardian Valerian by sending him to the Rhine frontier so that he could do away with his rival's son more easily. However, it is more likely that the sending of Valerian had nothing to do with the death of Hostilianus and that Gallus just miscalculated in trusting Valerian with the troops in question.²³

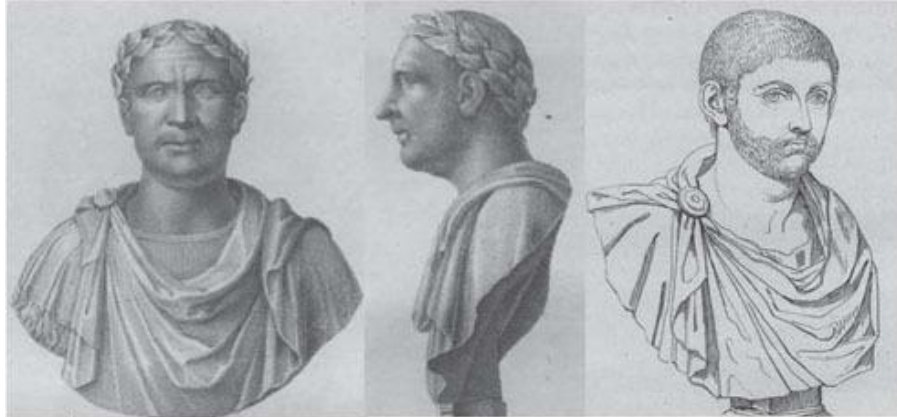
In order to legitimize his position after the humiliating peace, Gallus' plan seems to have been to begin three counter-offensives, one against the Goths, the second against the Alamanni, and the third against Persia. In preparation for the war against the Persians, a mint was moved to Antioch, but Shapur I struck first in late 252. In a classic pre-emptive strike, Shapur inflicted a crushing defeat on a 60,000 strong Roman army just as it had been assembled in its winter quarters at Barbalissos in 252/3, and then proceeded to occupy Nisibis.

Now Shapur was in a position to exploit his successes to the full. Altogether he conquered 37 cities and their surrounding territories. The great city of Antioch was betrayed by the supporters of the above-mentioned traitor Myriades, its former citizen, who was accompanying the army of Shapur. The Persian army encamped about 3.7 km from the city. The so-called respectable classes fled from the city, but the majority of the population remained because they supported Myriades. Were these Christians? Shapur apparently set up Myriades (Cyriades) as his puppet emperor and gave him Persian elite soldiers to act as his bodyguards. According to Rawlinson, the accompanying relief depicts Shapur I presenting Cyriades to the Roman troops as their new emperor. Unfortunately for Myriades, the Persians still plundered the city, took slaves and set it on fire. Consequently, after Shapur had returned to Persia, Myriades' position was very weak. Myriades may have been killed by his own followers, but this is not known with certainty.²⁴



According to Rawlinson, in this relief (Darabgerd) Shapur I presents Cyriades to the Roman troops as their new emperor (source of illustration: Rawlinson). However, others (see Shavarebi) have identified in the relief three Roman emperors: Gordian III (the corpse), Philip the Arab (approaching and pleading for peace) and Valerian (left hand over the head to signify imprisonment).

There also exists evidence for the exploits of one L. Julius Aurelius Sulpicius Severus Uranius Antoninus of the city of Emesa for this period. The extant evidence suggests that this man defeated the Persians when they attempted to take the city of Emesa in about 253/4. This is proven by the series of coins and inscriptions celebrating the victory. The names Severus Antoninus associated him with the Severans and in particular with Caracalla (Antoninus Magnus), who was still remembered with great fondness. The evidence suggests that the local high priest Uranius achieved his success with treachery (the trademark of Caracalla) by requesting an audience with the Persian commander (in Malalas falsely named as Shapur I himself), and when the two met, one of his rustic followers then assassinated the Persian with a slingshot. In fact, the extant inscription even celebrates the successful use of the treachery! Thanks to his great victory Uranius duly usurped power and adopted the titles of *imperator* and *Augustus*. Unfortunately, we do not know what happened next because he disappears from the pages of history after this. He may have reached an agreement with Valerian and retired, or have been killed, possibly by his own followers.²⁵



Top Left and Centre: Gallus, front and sideviews, according to Visconti
 Top Right: Vibius Volusianus according to Piranesi

Gallus also seems to have backed away from his promise to pay subsidies to the Goths, with the result that they invaded in 252. Aemilianus was appointed to lead the campaign against the invaders.²⁶ The Goths plundered the Balkans and even crossed to Asia, where they ravaged Cappadocia, Pessinus and Ephesus. However, when the invaders were already retreating back to their own lands, Aemilianus managed to surprise and kill most of them in Pannonia, undoubtedly when they were in the middle of crossing the Danube, and then pursued the remnants across the river. As a result of this victory, Aemilianus was now able to proclaim himself emperor and claim success where Gallus had failed. Aemilianus assembled his army and then marched towards Rome. He was of lowly Moorish origins, but the victory over the Goths and the bribery of the troops had made his position strong enough to usurp power.²⁷

MAP: In about 249-251 Shapur I reacted to the breach of agreement regarding the Armenian question between him and Philip the Arab by despatching Hormozd/Hormizd to support the traitor Myriades. The successful campaign was halted when there were troubles in Khurasan. After these were solved Shapur I exploited the Roman difficulties by launching an invasion in about 252/3. In 252/3 Shapur I advanced along the Euphrates bypassing Roman fortresses so that these would not slow him down. The Romans massed their forces, but were defeated decisively at the battle of Barbalissus in 253. This opened up the route to Syria. Shapur divided his army at Hierapolis: the southern division marched to Raphanea and the northern division through Zeugma towards Seleucia. The two divisions united to take the city of Antioch, the queen of Syria in 253. After this, the army was divided once again. The northern division reached Germanikeia while

the southern division marched south only to be defeated by the Romans under Uranius at the battle of Emesa in 253. We do not know what happened after that because the next time the sources mention Shapur operating on his western front takes place in 256. It was possibly then that he conquered Antioch for the second time and destroyed Dura Europus, but it is also possible that the siege of Dura Europus had taken place already, in about 252/3. For the siege of Dura Europus, see the outstanding study by Simon James (2004/2010). Harry Sidebottom describes a fictional version of the siege as the siege of Arete in his *Warrior of Rome 1. Fire in the East*. In my opinion the likely reason for the absence of hostilities for the years 254 and 255 is that Khosrov the Great, the King of Armenia, achieved some great successes against Shapur at the same time as the emperor Valerian was in the east (or at least in the Balkans) and for the renewal of hostilities in 256 that Valerian is attested to have been in the west with his son Gallienus. For further information see the narrative and the bibliography in Maksymiuk pp.25-39. Note that my above reconstruction of the course of events differs from that adopted by Maksymiuk and Kettenhofen.



4.3 The Three-Four-Month Reign of Aemilianus in ad 253

During the winter of 252–253 Gallus appears to have made the mistake of denuding Italy of troops by assembling an army in Raetia in preparation for the invasion of the lands of the Alamanni, or at

least that might be one explanation for the lack of troops in Italy. The other possibility is that the forces had simply been sent north prior to this, for example against the unknown Silbannacus (see 4.4) and were now being assembled in Raetia for a planned eastern campaign. The modern consensus opinion is that Gallus had very foolishly appointed Valerian, the close friend of Decius, as commander of this army. This account is contradicted by Zosimus (1.28) who claims that Valerian was actually dispatched north of the Alps to bring troops for Gallus only after Aemilianus had already usurped the power. Whatever the timing and reason, it appears probable that Valerian had been simply waiting for his opportunity, and that this had now arrived. The very convenient death of Hostilianus would also have made Valerian very suspicious of Gallus' intentions.

Consequently, when the news of Aemilianus' usurpation reached Valerian's ears, along with Gallus' instructions to come to his assistance, or when he had already reached the army, Valerian started to engineer his own proclamation. However, he did not do this immediately.²⁸ In truth, Valerian was in no hurry to join Gallus' army. Valerian simply waited until Gallus along with his army had marched away from Rome, and only then had his own army proclaim him emperor. His son Gallienus in Etruria and their accomplices at Rome had been waiting for this. Gallienus appears to have returned to Rome from Etruria, where the Senate eagerly proclaimed him Caesar, presumably in August 253, and recognized Valerian's claim.²⁹ It is possible that there was also a usurper named Silbannacus at Rome at this time, who would have been killed by Gallienus and his supporters (see 4.4).

Now Gallus faced a revolt in his rear led by the Senate and Gallienus while in front he faced the fast approaching hostile army of Aemilianus and not far behind them the army of Valerian. The outnumbered army of Gallus killed both Gallus and his son Volusianus, either after a brief battle or without a fight, and then went over to Aemilianus. What is notable about this is that the soldiers who killed Aemilianus are called *domestici* by John of Antioch (f150). To me this suggests the possibility that these *domestici* are the so-called *protectores domestici* who may have been part of the so-called *aulici/scholae/protectores*, or their officers, or an elite unit belonging to these. Whatever their connection to these units was, it is clear, as Banchich states, that these were either members of a regiment of imperial guards, or simply officials or retainers.

But now it was Aemilianus' turn to be surrounded by enemies. In his distress he made the desperate suggestion to the Senate that the Senate itself should take the supreme power while he himself would act as their general in charge of the Balkans and the east. However, things moved too fast for him and for the senators. When Valerian's army approached Aemilianus, the latter's soldiers killed Aemilianus either after a brief battle or without a fight.³⁰ There were two reasons for this: Valerian's army was stronger; and the Praetorians and other bodyguard units, along with *Legio II Parthica* - now in Aemilianus' army - had relatives back in Rome that could have been used as pawns in the power struggle. These events undoubtedly left a very strong mark on Gallienus, who certainly could remember very vividly the role of the Senate in these events and the very real threat it could pose to him.

4.4Silbannacus

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There exist two coins which attest to the existence of an otherwise unknown emperor called Silbannacus. The first of the coins was acquired from a Swiss dealer by the British Museum in 1937. It was claimed that the coin was found in the Lorraine region. It was thanks to this dubious origin that some researchers considered the coin as a modern fake. However, the situation changed in 1996 when another coin bearing the name Silbannacus was found near Paris.

As noted, the only evidence for his existence consists of these two coins, which has meant that several different theories have been forwarded on the basis of the typology of the coins. Before the appearance of the second coin, most researchers suggested that Silbannacus must have ruled at some point in time from 240 until 260. Mattingly (in 1940 and 1949) noted that the style of the coin resembled those struck at the mint of Rome, but still stated that the mint where it was struck was likely to be some unknown mint, possibly in Lorraine, and that Silbannacus must have been one of the usurpers of the reign of Philip the Arab (244–249). In 1982 F. Hartmann suggested that Silbannacus was a commander on the Rhine who revolted against Decius (249–251) at the time when Eutropius (9.4) claimed that there was a civil war in Gaul. In 1989 J.-M. Doyen suggested that Silbannacus' usurpation must have taken place between 253 and 259–260, but that the latter date is preferable.



This head is my sketch of the obverse of the British Museum coin of Silbannacus

Only two coins attest to the existence of this otherwise unknown emperor Silbannacus. These bear the following texts:

1) British Museum Version Found in Lorraine ca.1937

Obverse: IMP M AVR SILBANNACUS AVG

Reverse: VICTORIA AVG with Mercurius

2) Found near Paris in ca. 1996

Obverse: IMP MAR SILBANNACVS AVG

Reverse: MARTI PR/OPVGT with Mars

The finding of the second coin and Sylviane Estiot's article changed the picture so that it is now commonly assumed that Silbannacus was probably an officer left behind in the city of Rome by Aemilian to secure the capital while he himself marched against Valerian.³²

When Aemilian was then killed, Silbannacus tried to usurp the power for himself only to be killed swiftly by those who supported Valerian. The reason for this conclusion is that Silbannacus' coins bear very

close resemblance to the coins struck in the name of Aemilian in the capital, so that it even included the misspelled MARTI PROPVGT (*Propugnator*) instead of the more common PROP, PROPVG, or PROPVGNAT. The other reasons are the stylistic similarities, as well as the high quality of the coin in comparison with the typical period coins struck by usurpers in the provinces.

However, my own suggestion is that none of the above is conclusive. Firstly, it is also possible that if we assume that the coins were minted at Rome then Silbannacus could have been an officer left behind by Gallus when he marched against Aemilian and that Aemilian's coins resemble those of Silbannacus because he simply changed the head on the coins. Secondly, it is entirely possible that the same sort of spelling mistakes could have also been made elsewhere in the Empire. Thirdly, it is also possible that good quality coins could have been struck elsewhere in the Empire if the usurper had had access to professional mint workers (e.g. retired ones). This is particularly important in light of the fact that both coins have been found in France (Gaul) and because the name Silbannacus and other onomastical details [*Silvan* – [*n*]*acus* and no *tria nomina* in the name] suggest a connection with Cisalpine Gaul.³³

Consequently, with all of these uncertainties, I am very hesitant to pinpoint an exact date or place for the reign of Silbannacus. However, if his reign occurred as commonly suggested, it is clear that the declaration of Gallienus as Caesar in Rome before the arrival of his father Valerian must have included some sort of violent action either by the Senate and/or by Gallienus and his supporters against the usurper. The fact that Valerian was a well-respected high-born Roman senator must have sealed the fate of the Gallic usurper Silbannacus, while the naming of Gallienus as Caesar could be taken to mean that he had had some sort of role in the overthrow of Silbannacus.

GALLIENVVS AVG. Gallienus radiate and helmeted holding a spear.

1: LEG III ITAL VI P VI F, Ibis or stork. AE antonianus of Gallienus struck at Milan in AD 258. This coin emphasizes the loyalty of *legio III Italica* to Gallienus and his own warrior qualities as their comrade in arms. The drawing of the worn-out coin is slightly simplified by presenting the beard and hair with black.



Chapter Five

The Joint Reign of father Valerian and son Gallienus in 253–259

The new rulers/sovereigns could not rest on their newly won laurels. The Roman Empire faced threats in Europe, Africa and in the East. Valerian made Gallienus Augustus on 22 October 253. His plan was to leave Gallienus as Augustus in control of the West (Britain, Rhine and Danube frontiers, Spain, North Africa) while he would take care of the east himself.

5.1 The Internal Policies of Valerian

Unsurprisingly, the reign of the elderly Italian aristocrat Valerian (Valerianus) meant the return of the ultra-conservative senatorial party into power. This can be detected in everything he did. The reverses of his coins were largely based on the Severan era coins that had not been used since 235. However, the most important feature of his form of conservatism was the renewal of the persecution of Christians in a manner never before seen. Orosius even claims that Valerian started his persecution immediately on assuming the power, but in actual fact the edict that launched the greatest persecution to which he refers was issued at Rome in very early 257. This is proven by Eusebius' quote of Dionysios' letter, which states that Valerian began his reign by showing unprecedented kindness to the Christians, such as not even the emperors who had been avowed Christians (at least Philip the Arab, but clearly included also others) had shown, but then on the advice of a teacher and guild-leader of Egyptian magicians decided to get rid of them. The text implies that this man was Macrianus (see the events of the year 257). This means that Orosius misleads us by compressing his material: the actual persecution began only later in 257. The raising of the status of the Roman Senate obviously meant that Gallienus had to take into account its influence when he subsequently became the sole ruler.¹

5.2 Industries, Trade, Financial Policies and Propaganda 253–268

Valerian and Gallienus inherited an empire that had suffered a series of military disasters that had weakened its economic base. These

included the destruction of entire field armies at Abrittus and Barbalissus, and the devastation of large tracts of land in the Balkans and east as a result of these wars. It was ever more difficult to collect taxes and to obtain bullion for the coins, and this at a time when the emperors needed to replace large numbers of soldiers lost.

During this time period the Roman countryside was devastated as a result of wars, famine and plague, and by the two 'world-quakes' in 242 and 262. In this situation the army was increased to meet the crises at a time when the tax base was constantly diminishing as a result of the above, and because ever-increasing numbers of tenants of urban landowners, small freeholders and medium-sized landowners chose to become *coloni* of the large landowners in order to obtain the latter's protection against the increasing taxes and taxes-in-kind (*annona*). These magnates had their means to escape taxes, and their estates were increased even further because they were able to buy additional land at cheap prices. The villas of the magnates in their turn became centres of industry which weakened the industries in the cities.

The pestilences, ravages of war, famines and diminishing trade (diminishing buying power in the countryside and cities, problems with foreign trade) in their turn caused some of the city-dwellers to flee to the countryside so that the tax-base was further weakened. On top of this, the period practice of taking the entire population of a conquered city as slaves (that is, those who could be sold or used) together with the wholesale devastation of the surrounding area meant very serious economic damage for the Roman economic base that was difficult to repair. However, this development did not concern all of the cities, because the administrative and military centres prospered and grew in size, and their NCOs, officers and officials actually prospered, so that some of them became magnates with large *latifundia*. The wars and the requisitioning of the means of transport (vehicles, boats, ships, oxen etc.) made it ever more difficult to conduct business operations, which in their turn contributed to the vicious cycle of problems.

The standard methods adopted by practically all emperors, Valerian and Gallienus included, were the confiscation of the property of the rich with various excuses, taxing of the rich with special taxes, tax reforms, and the debasing of coins. Initially the debasing of the coins was not particularly detrimental to the economy, but by the 260s the situation became such (see below) that the silver coins

became so worthless that these could no longer be used as means of exchange in foreign trade, especially in Germania and India. The debasing of the silver coins also caused people to hoard and hide their gold coins so that the Empire also could no longer afford to buy a peace in return for gold without having to face serious financial difficulties.

All of the above meant that the middle-class, those who traditionally paid the majority of the taxes, was diminishing in size and prosperity, both in cities and in the countryside, while the rich (landowning magnates consisting mostly of the members of the senatorial class, officers, NCOs, administrators and officials) were becoming ever richer. The poor just remained poor. This obviously meant that the brunt of the taxes fell on those who could ill afford them.

As noted above, the emperors attempted to solve their tax problems mainly in the traditional manner by diminishing the silver or gold content of the coins. This tendency intensified under the sole rule of Gallienus, who lost territories permanently or for extended periods of time as a result of the usurpations and invasions. At the same time as this happened, the local mints, which struck tokens of copper, were in trouble thanks to the diluting of the imperial coins. The copper currency disappeared because its value was too close to the 'silver-coins'. Most of these mints closed their doors during the reign of Gallienus. This spelled financial disaster for the senators and other well-to-do citizens who had invested in them. It is no wonder that these men were not happy with the rule of Gallienus.

The other side of the dilution of the silver and gold content in the imperial coins was rising inflation. According to one calculation, the minting of 'silver-money' rose by 700 per cent between the years 200–270 ad, which is a good indication of this. The prices rose relatively steadily until the year 270, but after this inflation gained additional speed. My own view is that, contrary to the 'hyper-inflation' situation after ca. 270, this steady rise of prices (i.e. inflation) until 270 was actually beneficial for the economy as it boosted consumption and production so that the monetary policy of the emperors up to the reign of Gallienus can be considered to have been a success, but this view is not shared by most historians. Most modern historians consider inflation to be bad for the economy on the basis of the inter-wars German experience, but this is a fallacy. The German example is not a good one because the inflation was purposefully created by the

German authorities in a situation in which they had to pay war indemnities. In truth, all economies need to have some sort of inflation for the economy to prosper and this was the situation roughly up to the year 270. However, it is still clear that the massive economic crisis that took place after that was caused by Gallienus. He increased the number of issues and his coins showed greater variation-range in every kind of coin than had been the case before. Under Valerian the variation-range of coins was usually about 10 per cent of the average weight of the coin in question (at most 20 per cent), but under Gallienus the situation became so bad that the variation could even be 90 per cent. This meant that the public started to weigh the gold coins in order to see their real worth. In short, the coins no longer had any real face value. This resulted in complete monetary chaos.

Gallienus can hardly be blamed for this because he needed more money than the earlier emperors to retain the loyalty of his soldiers, to replace the troops lost, and to buy peace from foreign enemies in a situation in which his revenues were falling thanks to the many revolts and invasions. It is therefore not surprising that he was forced to resort to a series of emergency measures. When the Empire was wrecked by a series of usurpations it was absolutely necessary to bribe the soldiers with a series of *donativa*, and this in a situation in which the money was starting to disappear from circulation when the people who had 'good' money started to hoard it.

Valerian attempted to rectify the situation by persecuting Christians so that he could get his hands on their money, but Gallienus abandoned this policy as it alienated significant sections of society. Instead of this, Gallienus resorted to the same policy as had been followed previously by Caracalla,³ who constantly proclaimed military victories (possibly even inventing them, like Caracalla was claimed to have done) to collect *aurum coronarium* from the upper classes, which included the senators. Lukas de Blois speculates that this may have been the reason for the countless issues of coins, including the 'legionary coins', which proclaimed numbered victories. It was thanks to this that Gallienus's gold supplies were in better shape than his silver supplies, and it was thanks to this that Gallienus produced more gold coins than the emperors between 235 and 253. It is also probable that Gallienus raised levies of soldiers from the estates of the large landowners (mostly senators) in the form of taxes and that this contributed to the hatred the senators had towards him and his friends

and relatives. The continual debasement of the coins and the increase of issues together with the variation-range in weights meant that the wages of the soldiers and civil servants dropped in practice. This in turn meant that the government started to resort to the payments-in-kind called *annona* so that the soldiers would get the same supplies as previously.

Lukas de Blois (p.92) notes that the recurrent problems with the soldiers' pay, both in money and in kind, were the cause behind many of the mutinies. He mentions the case of Claudius Firmus, the Prefect of Egypt, in 264. When he marched southward through Egypt in 264 his forces lacked every sort of supply. He also notes that it is unlikely to be a coincidence that Ballista and Macrianus were both known for their ability to provide supplies for the soldiers. Gallienus' solution to the problem was to simplify the governmental structure in some provinces and to subject everything to the needs of the army. He also subjugated the coinage and monetary policy to the needs of the army so that mints were founded wherever there were field armies. Gallienus' aim was to instill loyalty among the rank-and-file towards him. The soldiers who were loyal to Gallienus were given golden *multipla* which compensated for their loss of purchasing power resulting from the debasement of the regular coins. It is not a coincidence that the soldiers adored Gallienus at the time of his murder. However, Blois still notes that this was the only bright spot in Gallienus' monetary policy, which was otherwise a disaster. The decentralization of the imperial mint made strategic sense, but the downside of this was the increase of imperial issues, the loss of control over the staff, and the loss of unity of the existing denominations. It is very likely that the loss of unity resulted at least partially from the corruption of the mint workers. The largesse shown to the soldiers in the form of gold coins also increased the financial stress. The emperor needed ever more money to keep the soldiers happy. This was a spiralling cycle which his successors inherited.

The coins were also the principal form of propaganda, which the emperors used to advertise their right to rule. Gallienus subordinated everything to his need to maintain the loyalty of his troops. It was because of this that his coins stressed the loyalty of his forces and his own heroic or godlike qualities. It was because of this that the military themes were dominant in Gallienus' coins. The gold, silver and bronze coins and medallions advertised three basic legends: 1) FIDES MILITUM (*Fides equitum*, *Fides praet.*, *Fides praet vota X*, *fides exerc.*

VIII, *Fides leg. Fidei mil.* etc.); 2) VICTORIA(E) AUG. (*Victoria(e) Gallieni Aug. sometimes with number, Victoria(e) Aeterna(e) Aug., Victoria(e) Ger. and Victoria(e) Parth.*); and 3) VIRTUS (*Virtus Aug., Virtus Gallieni Aug., Virtus Faleri, Virtus militum, Virtuti Aug.* etc.). The coins also included other military legends like *Fortuna Redux, Bonus Eventus Aug., Bonae Fortuna, Iovi Propugnatori, Iovi Statori, Iovi Ultori, Marti pacifero, Marti propugnatori, Marti Victori, Mars Victor, Mars Ultor, Mars Aug.*, etc. In addition to the legends, the representations on the coins were intended to court the soldiers. The images included, for example, the emperor on horseback or on foot, armed or naked, and spearing or trampling his enemies, and/or alongside Mars, Hercules etc. The coins stressed Gallienus' heroic leadership and his comradeship with the army. It is not without reason that we find Gallienus challenging Postumus to single combat and that we find Gallienus charging towards the enemy at the time of his assassination. Gallienus stressed his connection with the army also with the so-called legionary coins (name of the legion with the abbreviations V P V F, VI P VI F, VII P VII F, etc.) and with the coins that had the legend of *Gallienus cum exercitu suo* (minted in Cologne in 257–258) and with the coins that had the legend *Alacritati* with a flying Pegasus on the reverse – Pegasus being the symbol of cavalry.

Gallienus' coins also have an array of gods to court the soldiers and populace. These do not consist solely of the military gods, but include also so-called civilian gods. The most striking feature of his use of gods is the number of times Sol appears on his coins and inscriptions. According to Blois, Sol occurs more often in coins and inscriptions under him between the years 250 and 268 than ever before since the rule of the Severi. His example was subsequently followed by Aurelian. Gallienus also revived the *exemplum Alexandri Magni* that had been previously used by Caracalla so that he had himself called *Magnus* or *Magnus et Invictus*. Just like his predecessors, Gallienus also advertised his own successes, or the successes of his generals, with the titles *Germanicus Max.* and *Persicus Max.* Taken together, it is for this reason that Lukas de Blois calls Gallienus the most blatantly military of the soldier emperors.

However, Gallienus did not restrict his propaganda solely to military topics. Just like practically all emperors since Augustus, he also assumed the role of the peacemaker who brought prosperity to all. This correlates with the sequence of events. It was after Gallienus had secured his position by defeating the enemy invasions and

usurpers (except Postumus) in 262 that he increasingly started to use peace and prosperity themes alongside his military themes in his coins. He continued to represent himself as a god, hero, saviour, but these themes were now increasingly used to show that he brought peace and prosperity to his subjects. He wanted to represent himself as the good prince who had the right to rule thanks to his dynastic position and thanks to his good attributes. The coins of Salonina appear to have the same object. Numismatists have paid particular attention to those of her coins that have the legend *Augusta in pace* because this was a typical tomb inscription for Christians, as a result of which it has been suggested that she was a Christian, but the current consensus view is that the text should actually be seen to identify Salonina with the *Pax* (peace). The principal targets of all of this varied propaganda were the common soldiers and populace. The peace and prosperity theme obviously became hollow after the Goths and Heruls launched their massive invasions in 267 and Aureolus revolted at Milan.

Gallienus was also a philhellene. It is possible that the most peculiar series of coins struck around 265–266 with the legend *Gallianae Augustae* and a portrait of Gallienus with woman's features on the obverse and the legend *Victoria Aug.* or *Ubique Pax* on the reverse are a representation of Gallienus' love of all things Greek. The problem is that we do not know the exact circumstances and the purpose of this series of coins which made Gallienus appear effeminate. It was probably thanks to this that Gallienus was known as effeminate to the emperor Julian a hundred years later. This has given historians free range for a wide variety of speculations. The most common view, adopted first by Alföldi, is that these coins should be connected with the initiation of Gallienus in Eleusis so that Gallienus would have created a new deity called Galliena/Demeter, while others think that the goddess is actually Syracusan Kore-Persephone. Another claim put forth is that Gallienus intended to advertise that divinity could manifest itself in him in both masculine and feminine form, just as Claudius I had portrayed himself in the first century. Bray (222–223) puts forth another theory, which is that the *HA* may have invented a mythical female cousin Galliena for Gallienus, which overthrew the equally-mythical usurper Celsus on the basis of these coins. Perhaps it is the other way around. Perhaps Gallienus introduced the series of coins with the feminine legend and image to celebrate the services of his cousin Galliena. All of this is obviously speculation, but at least it has the advantage of explaining the

otherwise mysterious issue of coins. The timing of the coins could also be used to support this. It was in about 264/5 that the Prefect of Egypt was fighting against the Blemmyes and it would not be surprising to find that there would have been other troubles at the same time in North Africa. Whatever the original purpose of these feminine coins, all historians are unanimous that Gallienus appears to have gone too far with this so that he backed away from similar feminine legends and representations in the following coins.



One of the infamous gender-bending GALLI-
NAE AVGVSTAE coins. Drawing slightly
simplified.



One of the famous *cum exercitu*
from about 257-258. The text on the reverse reads *lovi Vic-
tori*. Drawing slightly simplified.



GALLIENVS AVG
REVERSE: MARTI PROPUGNAT(ori)
Another good example of Gallienus' coins, which celebrates his warrior
qualities. In this case the Mars front rank fighter advertises Gallienus' readi-
ness to fight in the front of his army. Note also the use of the radiate helmet
which advertises Gallienus' connection with the Sol.
Drawing slightly simplified.



GALLIENVS AVG
REVERSE: VIRTUS AVG
Just like most of Gallienus' coins this celebrates
his military virtues. On top of this, the bust of
Mars bears resemblance to Gallienus. Drawing
slightly simplified.



GALLIENVS AVG
REVERSE: SOLI CONS AVG
This coin includes a simultaneous referral to the Sol (note the
text and radiate diadem) and *equites* of Gallienus (Pegasus is
a symbol of cavalry). Drawing slightly simplified.



B.M.P. GALLIENVS AVG
REVERSE: ALACRITATI (NO S.C.)
This coin celebrates the famous alacrity of Gallienus
and his equally famous cavalry forces.
The Pegasus on the reverse is a symbol of cavalry
and in this case Gallienus' *equites*. Drawing slightly simplified.



coins of Gallienus in Beger (1696). Note the coins celebrating Decennalia and the use of various gods. The Neptune may refer to some naval action.



coins of Gallienus in Beger (1696). Note the advertisement of Gallienus' connection with various gods together with the centaur and Pegasus that advertised Gallienus' cavalry.

There is one consistent in Gallienus' use of gods in coins and medallions, which is that he wanted to represent himself as god-emperor, which at its highest form meant the apotheosis of Gallienus as Zeus Panhellenios. The most original issues were struck at a time when Gallienus' position seemed secure in 265–267 and it was then that Gallienus started to indulge himself in a unique manner so that he assumed the guise of various different gods one after another. The choice of gods was not only influenced by political needs, but also by Gallienus' own cultural taste. His love of the Greek culture was not shared by everyone in the military circles. Examples of Gallienus' coins (both drawn and photos) can be found below, in the text and Plates.



coins of Gallienus in Beger (1696). Note especially the coins celebrating *Fides Militum*, *Germanicus Maximus V* and *Restitutor Galliae* for the sole reign of Gallienus.



coins of Gallienus in Beger (1696). Note in particular the

advertisement of Gallienus' connection with the legions *II Adiutrix* and *IV Flavia*, which he did with all of the legions or their detachments that were under his command. It is possible that the coin which advertised his connection with the *legio II Adiutrix* meant its cavalry detachment because the reverse has the Pegasus on it.

5.3 The Creation of the Famed Cavalry Corps in 253–258

The exact sequence of Gallienus's movements from 253 up to 260 is not entirely clear. It is therefore fortunate that we know the movements of his father slightly better. What is known, however, is that Gallienus left the African campaigns to his subordinates and concentrated his attention on the Rhine and Danube frontiers. It is likely that in late 253 at least part of the armies previously taken away from Gaul and Raetia by Valerian were either dispatched back, or were escorted back by Gallienus himself to secure the loyalty of the armies, before Gallienus and father moved to the Danube frontier with the bulk of the forces. In autumn 253 both the Rhine and Danube frontiers lay open for invasion, because Aemilianus had brought the Danubian armies to Italy while Valerian had brought the Raetian armies to Italy to face them. Consequently, it is possible that Gallienus and/or Valerian returned part of the army back to the Rhine frontier and Raetia in person or at least dispatched part of the army back, but this is not certain. I am still inclined to think that Sommer (p.48) is correct when he suggests that Gallienus fought with success on the Rhine frontier in 253. However, one cannot entirely rule out the possibility that the emperors could have retained their field army in its entirety in Italy until 254 when both were present at Rome on 1 January to begin their consulships.

Regardless of whether Gallienus actually visited the Rhine frontier, it was during this time (253–256) that he celebrated a series of victories over the Germans and one over the 'Dacians' (i.e. the Dacian Carpi or the Sarmatians or both) in the Balkans, and it was also during this period that he started the creation of his famed mobile cavalry army, his personal *comitatus* (bodyguards) and central reserve. However, the first coins bearing VICTORIA GERM(anica) and VICTORIAE AUGG IT(erum) GERM(anicae) were struck in the name Valerian I, which means that Valerian may have been the person responsible for the first victories while en route to the east in 254. We do not know what Gallienus' role was in these victories because he appears to have accompanied his father to the Balkans when Valerian

began his journey to the east presumably very soon in the spring of 254 after they had assumed the consulship together. However, one cannot rule out the possibility that Valerian marched straight to the East and that it was actually Gallienus who achieved the two German victories in Gaul and Illyricum, and presumably also the one over the Dacians.⁴

There also exists a third possibility originally proposed by Alföldi, which is that Gallienus was in Gaul during 254 and that the German victories would therefore have referred to his victories there. It has long been recognized that the existence of the field mint at Viminacium until 256, when it was transferred to Cologne, suggests the probability that Gallienus went to Illyricum in 254, but one cannot entirely rule out the possibility that Gallienus could have moved from one front to another and that Alföldi is right.⁵

The evidence as it exists today suggests strongly that Gallienus started to recruit and collect horsemen immediately after being given command of military operations as Augustus, and that he had created a separate cavalry army out of these by 258, which Cedrenus in the 12th century called anachronistically *tagmata*. It should be noted however that Cedrenus' term is still accurate because it means the imperial cavalry army. It is likely that Gallienus' principal source of horsemen was the Balkans and that his cavalry armies consisted of both lancers and archers, even if the number of the latter suffered from the lack of access to the recruitment grounds of the eastern mounted archers. What is known with certainty is that by 258 Gallienus' *equites* were a fully-functioning independent cavalry corps which he employed side-by-side with his infantry. In 257 or 258, Gallienus minted coins with the legend '*Gallienus cum exercitu suo*' to celebrate his own new personal army. In fact, Gallienus moved his mint wherever he moved with his army so that he could always mint more money to retain the support of his army. He also debased his coins heavily so that he could produce greater quantities of coins to pay them. In addition, he used his coins as a readily available means of propaganda that was simultaneously directed towards his own troops, civilians and enemies. Philip Sidnell has estimated that the size of Gallienus' cavalry corps, which was based at certain periods of time at Milan, was about 30,000 men. This is likely to be roughly accurate because it corresponds in broad terms with the size of the large cavalry army in the diagram in the *Strategikon*. My own estimate is that Gallienus' personal cavalry army, which accompanied him on

campaigns, varied from 10,000 to 45,000 horsemen according to the situation.⁶

Gallienus' cavalry seems to have consisted of the regular cavalry detachments (*vexillationes*), auxiliary horse and Moorish javeliners, and of the cavalry forces posted in the west, which included also some Oshroenian, Palmyran, Emesan, Armenian and Parthian/Persian mounted archers. It is also likely that he had some horsemen drawn from the *Praetoriani*, *Aulici* and *equites singulares Augusti*. And whilst he was on the Danube frontier, he also created the so-called *Equites Dalmatae* that probably consisted of a mix of local Illyrian and Thracian recruits, local Roman cavalry and also most likely of Sarmatian mounted archers and lancers. It is also very probable that he recruited Germanic warriors into his cavalry as *Federates*. In other words, Gallienus showed great energy and efficiency in quelling enemies. Since Gallienus' cavalry forces also needed a separate commander and Aureolus is attested to have been such already in 258, it is clear that Gallienus re-created the office of *Magister Equitum* or its equivalent (e.g. *Comes Domesticorum Equitum* or *Comes Equitum*) for the overall commander of the cavalry (Aureolus in Zon. 12.24 'hipparchôn gennaiôs' and 'tôn basilikôn hippôn frontistês'; Zon. 12.25: 'archôn tês hippou'; Zos. 1.40.1 'tou tês hippou pasên hêgoumenon').⁷

In addition to the cavalry, Gallienus also appears to have formed an infantry *Comitatus* which consisted of legionary detachments drawn from all over his domains, and in some cases of entire legions.⁸ Once again these needed a separate commander, which makes it probable that Gallienus created a new office for the infantry as well, and the existence of the separation of infantry and cavalry in Gallienus' army in 267 proves this (see below). The likely title would have been the *Comes/Magister Peditum*, but it is also possible that the commander also served as commander of the *Protectores*, which would mean that the title was rather *Comes Domesticorum Peditum*.

In addition to this, it was about this time (early 250s) that the so-called *Protectores/ Protectores Domestici* (protectors/ protectors at home/court) become numerous in the extant sources and it has sometimes been suggested that these were created by Gallienus, but this seems not to be the case. The *HA* claims that there were also *Protectores* under the Severans and their existence is also attested in other sources, but what is certain is that it was during Gallienus' reign that their importance grew immensely.⁹ The exact organization is not known and many different theories have been suggested by historians.

My own suggestion (presented in the *MHLR Vol.1* and *Caracalla*) is that there were probably 'three' bodyguard units of *protectores/domestici* that consisted mainly of renamed units in addition to which came the honorary *Protectores*. The principal *Protectores* unit consisted probably of the former *speculatores* (originally 300 strong), and/or of the *aulici/scholae* created by Septimius Severus (or his predecessor) who performed simultaneously the functions of bodyguards, military intelligence gathering, acted as sort of political commissars who kept their superiors in check, and acted as a staff-college for the emperor who could then use these officers for special missions. The size of this unit appears to have been enlarged with the addition of foreigners, so that it became an actual combat unit and it also came to be called the *Protectores Domestici* to separate it from the other *protectores*. The second variant consisted of the units that were commanded by the detached officers of the *Protectores Domestici* and were known collectively as *Protectores*. The cavalry units are likely to have included at least the *Equites Singulares Augusti*, *Scholae*, some of the *Scutarii* units, *Promoti*, Dalmatian cavalry, and possibly also the *Equites Mauri* and *Stablesiani*. The probable infantry units would have consisted at least of the later *Ioviani* and *Herculiani* legions and possibly of some other units. The third groups of *protectores* would have consisted of the former bodyguards of the governors that were now only renamed as *protectores*. The *protectores* of the governors and generals would probably have included detached officers whose duty it would have been to keep an eye on their superiors and also to act as staff officers. In addition to these, there existed also the honorary *protectores* who received their title as a reward with the intention of making them loyal to the emperor.¹⁰ The commander of all of the *Protectores* would have been the *Tribunus et Magister Officiorum* (see the events of 268), below whom would have served the *Comes Domesticorum Equitum* or *Comes/Magister Equitum* in charge of the cavalry and the *Comes Domesticorum Peditum* or *Comes/Magister Peditum* in charge of the infantry. Unfortunately, the exact organization of the new bodyguards and Gallienus' reserve armies and the titles of the officers commanding them is not known with any certainty.

What appears to be certain is that the Romans had always grouped their cavalry forces separately from their infantry for combat and that they had also appointed separate temporary commanders for these, so there was nothing unprecedented about Gallienus' measures except that under him these forces became a permanent fixture of his reign

because these forces either campaigned with him or were used as separate reserve forces in strategic locales (e.g. Cologne, Trier, Milan, Verona, Aquileia, Poetovio, Lychnidus, Sirmium, Siscia, Viminacium, Philippopolis, and Byzantium) thanks to the needs of the moment. The field armies that were campaigning together for years obviously not only needed new and separate commanders, as has already been noted, but also a new organization and administrative solution to function effectively. Strobel (p.270) has noted that there is evidence for the existence of a special system of recruitment and of recruit training for the reign of Alexander Severus. It was then that Maximinus Thrax served in this capacity. After having taken power, Maximinus is also known to have created a new special training corps for the youth of the cities of Italy for two levies, the *Iuventus Nova Italica Sua* of the *dilectus prior* and *posterior*. In my opinion, it is probable that such officers had always been appointed when detachments were serving outside their provinces and there was a need for additional recruitment and training.¹¹

The fact that Gallienus seems to have started the reorganization of the bodyguard units immediately suggests that he may also have installed in place the other security measures for which he later became famous at the very beginning of his reign. In short, it seems likely that from the very start of his reign Gallienus used the *protectores* proper as his military intelligence apparatus and the *Frumentarii* (postmen/spies/ assassins) as his other intelligence gathering organization. As we shall see this did not secure him against usurpation and may in fact at least once have caused an usurpation.

As regards the organizational structure of Gallienus' 'New Army', there is one important piece of evidence in existence in the form of John Lydus's sixth-century list of former military units (*De magistratibus* 1.46, p.70.3–4), which refers to the existence of separate 6,000-man infantry legions, and 6,000 horsemen cavalry legions

(i.e. the equivalent of the later *mere/meros*). Since this list fails to mention the *limitanei* or *comitatenses* and includes the *Praetoriani*, it is clear that the names must predate the reign of Constantine, and my tentative suggestion is that it describes Gallienus' army. It is also likely that the list dates from the same period.

According to Lydus (*De Magistr.* 1.46), the professional Roman army consisted of: 1) cohorts of 300 *aspidoforoi* (shield-bearers); 2) cavalry *alae (ilai)* of 600 horsemen; 3) *vexillationes* of 500 horsemen; 4) legions of 6,000 footmen; and 5) 6,000 strong cavalry legions.

Lydus' referral to the 300-man cohorts of *aspidoforoi* is problematic. It is possible that Lydus has mistakenly taken the republican-era manipular legion of *principes*, *hastati*, and *triarii* to represent the cohort, but more likely than this is that the 300 men cohorts were actually third-century legionary detachments consisting of four centuries of shield-bearers (80 men per century) for a total of 320 men (depth four to eight men). In practice these cohorts would also have been strengthened with the light-armed (*lanciarii*, *sagittarii*, *verutarii*, *funditores*, *ferentarii*) which would have consisted probably of 160 men (deployed two to four deep behind the heavy-armed) for a total of 480 men (the size of the traditional cohort). The other alternative would be to equate the 300-man cohorts with the ancient 256-man *tagmata* mentioned by the *Strategikon* (12.B.8.1) so that each detachment (1024 men) consisted of four such and 256 light-armed men grouped separately, but in my opinion this seems to refer to the situation after the reforms of Constantine the Great.¹²

Lydus' list is also very useful in other ways, most importantly because it gives a comprehensive list of various types of troops encompassing the army. However, when reading the following list, the reader should keep in mind that the same men could perform several different combat roles, as a result of which not all of the types of troops were specialists. The inclusion of the *primoscutarii/protectores* in the list is also suggestive of this dating. These *protectores* would have been the bodyguards referred to above.

From the point of view of combat tactics, the inclusion of the *ocreati*, *hastati/ doryforoi*, *pilarii/akontistai*, *lanciarii*, and *verutarii* is important. This shows the equipment worn by the different ranks in battle formation. The *aspidoforoi* (shieldbearers) of the front ranks (depending upon the depth of formation ranks 1–2, or 1–4, or 1–8) would have varied their equipment according to the needs of the moment so that: 1) against cavalry they would have used spears as *doryforoi/hastati*; and 2) against infantry they would have employed javelins as *pilarii/akontistai*. The men deployed in the first and rear ranks as well as on the flanks would have used iron greaves as *ocreati*. The men behind the heavy infantry would have used some kind of javelins or bows. The following list is based on the edition and translation of Bundy (Lydus, pp.69–75) with some changes already included in Syvanne (2015).

Lydus' Legions:

alai apo ch hippeôn	alae of 600 horsemen (former auxiliary cavalry)
vexillationes apo f hippeôn	vexillationes of 500 horsemen (former legionary cavalry)
tourmai apo f toxotôn hippeôn	tourmae of 500 mounted archers (new type of cavalry created by Alexander Severus?)
legiōnes, legiones apo hexakischiliôn pezôn	legions of 6,000 infantrymen
hexakischiliôn pezôn	
tribounoi, dēmarchoi,	tribuni, tribunes
ordinarioi, taxiarchoi, ordinarii	ducenarii and centurions?
signiferai, sēmeioforoi,	signiferi, standard-bearers (during Vegetius' day called draconarii)
optiōnes, optiones	chosen men (centurion's deputies/ vicars) or registrars
vōxillarioi, doryforoi,	vexillarii, spear-bearing men belonging to vexillationes, i.e. legionary cavalry
mōnsōres	mensores, camp-surveyors
toubikines, salpistai pezôn	tubicines, infantry buglers
boukinatōres, salpistai hippeôn	bucinatores, cavalry buglers
kornikines, keraulai	cornicines, horn-blowers

andabatai, katafraktoi	andabatae, cataphract cavalry
mētatōres, chōrometrai	metatores, land-surveyors
archytēs kai sagittarioi, toxotai	arquites and sagittarii, archers and arrow-bearers
kai beloforoi	Praetoriani, Praetorians, general's men
praitōrianoi, stratēgikoi lagchiarioi/langchiaroi,	
akontoboloi	lanciarrii, lance-throwers
dekemprimoi, dekaprōtoi	decemprimi, heads of 10 horsemen, decani
benefikialioi, hoi epi therapeia tōn	beneficiales, those giving medical aid to the
beteranōn tetagmenoi	veterani/veterans.
torkouatoi, streptoforoi, hoi tous	torquati, torc-wearers who wear necklaces
maniakas foreuntes	(rewarded for bravery) and segmented arm-guards called manicae
brachiatoi, ē toi armilligeroi,	brachiati or armilligeri, bracelet-wearers (rewarded
pselioforoi	for bravery)
armigeroi, hoploforoi	armigeri (armour-bearers), arms-bearers (hop- lon-bearers)

mounerarioi, leitourgoi	munerarii, servants or soldiers (munifices) doing fatigues and services
dēputatoi, afōrismenoi	deputati, deputies appointed for a specific task
auxiliarioi, hypaspistai	auxilarii, auxiliaries (note the use of hypaspistai/ shield-bearers for foreign troops which is suggestive for their later use as a term for bucellarii)
kouspatōres, fylakistai	cuspatores, gaolers
imaginiferai, eichonoforoi	imaginiferi, imaginarii, image-bearers, i.e. bearers of the emperor's image
okreatoi, pezoi sidērōi tas knemas	ocreati, infantry with iron greaves to protect the
peripefrakmenoi	calves
armatoura prima, hoplomeletē	
prōtē	armatura prima, first arms service
armatoura sēmīssalia,	armatura semissalis, advanced arms practice
hoplomeletē meizōn	hastati, spearmen
hastatoi, doryforoi	
tessarioi, hoi ta symbola en tōi	tesserarii, who announce the watchword to the

kairōi tēs symbolēs tōi plēthei	soldiery at the time of encounter
perifēmizontes	
dracōnarioi, drakontoforoi	draconarii, the bearers of the dragon standard
adioutōres, hypoboēthoi	adiutores, adjutants
samiarioi, hoi tōn hoplōn stilpnōtai	semiarii, the polishers of arms
baginarioi/veginarioi/thēkopoioi	veginarii, scabbard-makers
arkouarioi, toxopoioi	arcuarii, bow-makers
pilarioi, akontistai	pilarii, javelin throwers
beroutarioi, veroutarioi, diskoboloi	verutarii, throwers of verutum/ spiculum javelin (Veg: shaft 3.5 ft, iron tip 5 in.)
founditōres, sfendonētai	funditores, slingers
ballistarioi, katapeltistai	ballistarii, catapult-men. A catapult is a kind of city
(katapeltēs de estin eidos	taker/siege engine; it is called by the soldiers/
helepoleōs, kaleitai de tōi plēthei onagros	multitude onager (wild ass)
binearioi, vinearioi, teichomachoi	vinearii, wall-fighters or men who fought with the siege sheds
primoskoutarioi, hyperaspistai,	primoscutarii, shield-bearers who are now called

hoi legomenoi protēktōres

protectores

primosagittarioi, toxotai prōtoi

primosagittarii, first archers (i.e. mounted bodyguard or commanders of LI?)

klibanarioi, holosidēroi. kēlibana

clibanarii, the horsemen who wear iron armour, for

gar hoi Rhōmaioi ta sidēra

the Romans call iron coverings celibana, that is to

kalummata kalousin, anti tou
kelamina

say celamina

kēlamina

flammoularioi, hōn epi tōs akras

flammularii, who bear at the end of their spears

tou doratos foinika rhakē

scarlet banners

exērtēnto

expeditoi, euzōnoi, gymnoi,

expediti, well-girt, lightly clad and mobile, ready

hetoimoi pros machēn

for battle (i.e. non-encumbered with baggage train and lightly equipped for ease of movement)

ferentarioi, akrobolistai

ferentarii, skirmishers

kirkitōres, hoi peri tous

circitores, who go about the fighters and give

machomenous periiontes kai

them arms honourably retired

soldiers; veterani,

chorēgountes hopla mētō

those who had grown old while in
service; tirones,

epistamenoι machesthai

recruits not yet permitted to fight.

adēratēres, beteranoi, teirēnes

adoratores

As regards cavalry tactics, I have suggested that Gallienus was responsible for the creation of the final form of the so-called Italian Drill Formation of the sixth-century *Strategikon* (cavalry, front line three divisions with outflankers on the right and flank guards on the left; second line four divisions with fill-up banda between them to keep the distances between the units; third line of two units of rear guards behind the flanks of the second line; see the Introduction), because Gallienus's creation of the so-called *Tagmata* to garrison Milan in about 260 would be the best explanation for the otherwise mysterious name.

5.4Valerian in the East 254–255

When Valerian arrived in the East in c.254, Shapur had already withdrawn and the revolt of Uranius Antoninus of Emesa had apparently been taken care of somehow. Initially at least Valerian had some successes to his credit and was even able to celebrate his victories by minting propaganda coins (see above). During this period, he retook the important city of Nisibis.¹³

If we are to believe the *HA* (Aur. 5.3ff.), the future emperor Aurelian also accompanied Valerian's expedition to the east in 254, in the course of which he was wounded in action. However, Valerian was unable to devote his full attention to the Persian front. He also had to deal with the maritime raids of the Goths and Heruls in Thrace and Asia Minor. In fact, the Roman response to the threat of the piratical Black Sea Germans was probably hampered by the fact that Valerian had retained control of the Bosphorus, Dardanelles and Thrace, together with Asia Minor, while the principal fleets, the Praetorian Fleets in Italy, were under the jurisdiction of Gallienus. Furthermore, Valerian also seems to have withdrawn most of the Black Sea fleet to

the Mediterranean. Or at least that would explain why we do not hear of any action taken by this fleet against the invaders across the sea.

Conversely, Gallienus' efforts to protect the Balkans were hindered by the fact that Valerian seems not to have concentrated any remaining naval forces for the protection of the mouth of the Danube and used whatever naval assets he had for supplying his army in the east. However, as we shall see, when Valerian detected his mistake, he immediately dispatched a commander (undoubtedly with additional troops and naval assets) to take control of the city of Byzantium and Chalchedon so that enemies could no longer pass through the Straits of Bosphorus and Dardanelles, but, as we shall see, Valerian gave the commander insufficient naval resources to do this. The cities of Antioch, Samosata and Edessa became Valerian's principal logistical, defensive and offensive bases for his war against the Persians.¹⁴

The probably fictitious letter from Valerian to Zosimio, the procurator of Syria (otherwise unknown), in the *HA* (Claud. 14.2ff.) states that he nominated Claudius as tribune of the *legio V Martia*. As usual in the case of the *HA*, the whole account is considered suspicious on the grounds that Zosimio is unknown and because even if *legio IV Martia* is known to have existed in Arabia in the fifth century there exists no evidence for the existence of the legion in other sources.¹⁵ In my opinion we do not know enough to dismiss this evidence solely on the grounds of this omission: the evidence for the third century is so poor that we do not know what units were raised and destroyed during that tumultuous century and we do not know the names of all of the officials and officers.

This probably fictitious letter does contain some enlightening pieces of evidence regarding the privileges and salaries of the period generals/*duces* (dukes), which I consider worthwhile to list. The letter claims that Claudius was a special case in that he received what was typical for a *dux*, but not for a tribune. According to the letter in question, Claudius was to receive each year: 3,000 *modii*/pecks of wheat (*modius* ca. 9 litres); 6,000 *modii* of barley; 2,000 *librae* (*libra* ca. 326 gr) of bacon; 3,500 pints of aged wine; 150 pints of best oil; 600 pints of second grade oil; 20 pecks of salt; 150 pounds of wax; 150 pounds of hay and straw; sufficient amounts of cheap wine, greens and herbs; 30 half-score of hides for tents; 6 mules per year; 3 horses per year; 10 camels per year; 9 she-mules per year; 50 pounds of silverware; 150 *aurei* (gold coins) of the likeness of Valerian per year; and as a New Year gift, 47 gold-coins of Valerian and 60½ gold-

coins; cups, tankards and pots 11 pounds; two red military tunics; two military cloaks; two gilded silver clasps; one golden clasp/ *fibula* with a Cyprian pin; one silver-gilded sword-belt; one ring with gems an ounce in weight (*uncia* = ca. 27 gr); one armlet seven ounces; one collar one pound; one gilded helmet; two gold-inlaid shields; one *lorica*-cuirass to be returned; two Herculan lances (*lanceae*); two javelins; two reaping hooks; four reaping hooks for cutting hay; one cook to be returned; one muleteer to be returned; two women taken from the captives; one white garment partially of silk and ornamented with purple from Girba (modern Djerba in Tunisia); one under-tunic with Moorish purple; one secretary to be returned; one server at table to be returned; two pairs of Cyprian couch-covers; two white undergarments; a pair of men's leg-bands; one toga to be returned; one broad-striped tunic to be returned; two huntsmen; one wagon-maker; one headquarters-steward; one waterer; one fisherman; one confectioner; 1,000 pounds of fire-wood each day (or as much as available) and four braziers of charcoal each day; one bath-attendant and firewood for the bath, and if there is none then Claudius was to use the public bath; and anything else that was needed in kind but not in cash.¹⁶

As noted, the list has been considered to be a forgery. One of the reasons put forth is the inclusion of the adjective *Herculianus* in the context of Herculan lances (*'lanceas Herculianas duas'*) because it is well-known that Maximian assumed the name Herculus at the same time as Diocletian assumed the title Jovius. It was then that some of the legions assigned to Maximian took the title *Herculia* or *Herculiani*.¹⁷ Vegetius (1.17) claims that in Illyricum there were two 6,000 strong legions that carried darts (five inserted into each shield) and which were so effective that Diocletian and Maximian named these as Jove and Hercules. This would definitely mean that the whole list would be fictitious or at least that the author has updated the terminology when composing his list. However, there is also another possibility, which is that the title Herculan lances was adopted into the military slang well before the reigns of Diocletian and Maximian to mean these so-called *plumbata/mattiobarbuli/ martiobarbuli* – darts, because the darts in question had lead weights/knobs so that they have some resemblance (in my opinion) to the club of Hercules, with the result that this could have influenced also the emperors in question. Whatever the truth, the list is still important because it shows what the author considered to have been the typical yearly salary of a general. It is also of note that the generals were expected to

possess sex-slaves for their own personal pleasure, and that the generals were also expected to possess bath-attendants, a practice for which there is evidence for earlier and later periods.¹⁸ The Roman generals were certainly among the well-to-do of the Roman society.

The *Historia Augusta* (Probus 3.5–4.7) also preserves another important section dealing with the early exploits of the future emperor Probus. According to this text, Probus caught the attention of Valerian thanks to his bodily strength so that he appointed Probus a tribune ‘almost before his beard was grown’. Of particular interest is the probably-fictitious letter of Valerian to Gallienus, which states that he had nominated Probus as a tribune and had given him command of six cohorts of Saracens together with the Gallic auxiliaries and Persians that Artabassis Syrus (the Syrian) had handed over to the Romans. It is possible, as is noted by Magie (*HA*, p.342, n.1), that Artabassis Syrus is an error for the Armenian Artavasdes, but we do not know this for certain. The important point here is that this information provided by the *HA* does fit the circumstances of the time it describes and is therefore in my opinion likely to contain at least a germ of truth. This piece of text, together with what follows (*HA Probus* 5), suggests strongly that Valerian dispatched reinforcements under Probus from the East to the Balkans to serve under Gallienus and that it is therefore likely that Gallienus’ elite *equites* included also some Persian cavalry units.

Archaeological finds by Stephen Mitchell and others also prove that when he arrived in the east Valerian billeted part of his forces on the coastal plain of Pamphylia and in the Pisidian Mountains. The coastal cities (especially Side) made those places easy to supply and the remoteness and the mountainous terrain protected the garrisons from the Persian invaders and later also from the Goths.¹⁹



Left: Aurelian (Aurelianus)
Right: Probus
Source of illustrations: Duruy

5.5 The Wars in the West in 255–256

In January 255, Gallienus briefly visited Rome to assume his consular powers, and then evidently returned to the Danube frontier because he was at Viminacium (modern Kostolac) in 255. The coins struck in Viminacium in 255/7 bear the text GERMANICUS MAXIMUS (with Tropaeum to signal victory) for Gallienus, and VICTORIA GERM(anica) for Valerian. It is probable that at least in this case the victory was achieved by Gallienus himself, because Valerian had already moved to the east. Valerian's 'successes' (the usurpation of Uranius which was probably crushed by the locals and the Persian withdrawal before his arrival) in 254 were celebrated with coins struck with the texts VICT(oria) PARTICA and VICT(oria) AUGG.²⁰

In summer 255, Gallienus seems to have fought against the invading Sarmatians and possibly also against other tribes like the Quadi. The existence of the field mint at Viminacium suggests that there were troubles in Dacia, possibly caused by some tribe or tribes (the likely candidates include: the Carpi, Dacians, Bastarnae, Peuci, Sarmatians, Taifali and Goths). However, in late 255 he had to hurry back to Gaul to protect the Rhine frontier against the Germans (probably the Franks) and the Alamanni.²¹ On the basis of the *HA* (Aur. 10.1ff.), when Gallienus had hastened to Gaul to defend it against the Alamanni and the Franks he had left Crinitus behind in the Balkans as *dux* of Illyricum and Thrace. Gallienus also transferred the mint from Viminacium to his new headquarters. Gallienus seems to have made the cities of Treves (Trier), Colonia Agrippina (Cologne)

and Mogontiacum (Mainz) the principal bases in Gaul for both offensive and defensive purposes. There is no definite evidence for this, but it is possible that Gallienus made Trier in the interior the base of his cavalry reserves while Cologne served as a base of operations against the Franks and Mainz against the Alamanni. It is probable that he followed a similar defensive structure also in the Balkans by posting his cavalry reserves at Siscia (mint attested in 262) and the forward bases at Sirmium and Aquincum (see later).

By this time in 255 the future emperor Aurelian seems to have been transferred to the Balkans, because he and 300 men of his garrison are said to have defeated the Sarmatians. According to the *HA* (Aur., 6.3ff.), in the war against the Sarmatians Aurelian killed with his own hand 48 men in a single day and in the course of several days he slew over

950. The figure sounds quite incredible. If he did indeed kill so many men with his own hand, his phenomenal rise in the army finds a simple explanation, but a more likely explanation is that he personally killed 48 men and his troops the rest. Again if we are to believe the *HA* (Aur., 7.1ff), Aurelian followed Gallienus to Gaul in late 255, where he distinguished himself as tribune of *Legio VI Gallicana* at Mainz.²²

The other possibilities are: Gallienus and Aurelian had been in Gaul in 254; Aurelian was acting as a deputy for some unknown commander in Gaul in 253–254 when the emperors were in the Balkans; or that the campaigns against the Sarmatians and Franks actually refer to even earlier instances. It is impossible to be certain, but the referral to a possibly fictitious song in which the soldiers looked forward to killing 1,000 Persians would suggest that the Sarmatian and Frankish adventures took place before 254. On the other hand, it is possible that this song merely presented a wish that similar campaigns would take place against the Persians in the future. After all, the Romans could foresee a major campaign against the Persians, also in 255–6. My own guess is that Aurelian did indeed follow Valerian to the east in 254 where he was wounded, and was then, together with Probus (see above), transferred to Gallienus' army where he distinguished himself against the Sarmatians in early 255 and then against the Franks in the summer of 255. In the last instance Aurelian is said to have completely crushed one of the invading parties of the Franks, killing 700 and capturing 300 whom he sold as slaves. During this time Aurelian was known as a severe disciplinarian

with the nickname '*Aurelianus manu ad ferrum*' (Aurelian Sword-in-hand). He is said to have had a soldier torn in two with two bent trees because the man had committed adultery. Aurelian and Gallienus were clearly the polar opposites as far as their sexual behaviour is concerned. Similarly, he is said to have sent a letter to his cavalry tribune in which he used harsh language to make it absolutely clear that the soldiers were required to treat the civilians well. He is also said to have acted as a deputy for generals and tribunes on about 40 occasions. The information in the *HA* (Aur. 10.1ff.) suggests that Aurelian was then transferred back to the Balkans to act as a *vicar* of Crinitus in the Balkans, presumably also in 255. He was clearly used as a deputy officer wherever needed.

The inscriptions place Valerian in Antioch in January 255, at Tisa near Sirmium in 255, and at Cologne in August 256. This means either that: 1) Gallienus and Valerian met each other in the Balkans in the summer of 255 and then moved to Gaul; or 2) that when Gallienus was forced to march to Gaul to face the Germanic invaders, Valerian left the east to organize defences in the Balkans in the absence of his son, and then both met at Cologne in August 256 (at the same time as this happened the imperial mint was also transferred from Viminacium to Cologne). The last is likeliest in light of what Zosimus states and this version receives support also from the above-mentioned adventures of Aurelian and Probus.

According to Zosimus (1.30), Gallienus defended the Rhine crossings as best he could to prevent anyone from coming across and when the enemy managed to get across he engaged them in battles and skirmishes. With good reason, Brauer suggests that the invasion of the Alamannic king Chroc/Chrocus/Crocus mentioned by Gregory of Tours belongs to this period. According to Gregory, the proud and pitiless Chrocus invaded Gaul at the suggestion of his evil mother. Not even temples were sacred to him and he made the Christians suffer. Finally, at Arles, on the Rhone near the Mediterranean coast, he was captured, tortured and put to death. It is clear that Gallienus fought against huge odds. He faced two very powerful tribal confederations, the Franks (= the Free = the Freeman) and the Alamanni (= All the Men) simultaneously. His forces were spread very thin. He faced numerically vastly superior enemy. He evidently could not hope to cope with all of the simultaneous attacks even with his mobile cavalry army. Therefore, ever resourceful and ingenious, Gallienus made an alliance with one of the German/Frankish leaders, probably along the

lower Rhine, who prevented the others from making crossings in his sector of the frontier. In addition to this, Gallienus seems to have fortified Cologne (Colonia Agrippinensis), Trier (Augusta Treverorum/Treves), Neuss (Novaesium), Andernach (Antumnacum) and evidently many other places. Such fortifications were urgently needed.²³

In other words, the Roman defensive strategy was still primarily based on the use of a preclusive strategy. The enemy invasion was to be stopped in the frontier zone if at all feasible. However, in practice the Roman forces were now too thinly spread out along the frontiers to stop the invasions. Gallienus could not be everywhere simultaneously to assist the frontier forces in their effort to plug the holes in the defences. The dams were broken and Gallienus had to act as a plumber. The frontiers were overwhelmed by the sheer scale of simultaneous invasions, because the defeats suffered under the previous emperors had reduced the strength of the professional army. To put it simply, when the enemy had achieved a breakthrough, Gallienus had to resort to the use of mobile cavalry and guerrilla warfare to engage the various raiding parties and then to the use of allies to stabilize the frontier. But Gallienus proved to be the man of the hour. He had the mental capacity to cope with the situation. He was ready to adapt and improvise. On top of this, he was able to do so in such a manner that he never suffered from the lack of provisions – or at least the hostile sources do not mention such, which they would certainly have done had his forces been subjected to such problems. The later invasions of the Alamanni and Goths also show that he already used the typical defensive strategy of the later empire to engage the retreating and tired enemy in pitched battle close to the border areas with great success. In addition, he organized the building of fortifications throughout the frontiers and inland in order to create a defensive network of hardened shelters for the civilians and garrisons.

In addition, if we are to believe the *Historia Augusta's* probably-fictitious letters and other information (*Aurelian* 6.1ff.), enemies had invaded the Balkans again in force after Gallienus had been forced to move to the Rhine frontier. Part of the reason for the success of these enemies appears to have been the illness of the supreme commander of the Balkan armies, Crinitus. It was presumably because of this that Valerian moved to the Balkans, where he is attested to have been near Sirmium in 255. According to the fictitious letter to Aurelian in the *HA*, Valerian ordered Aurelian to take command of the war in the

Nicopolis (presumably ad Istrum) area during the medical leave of Crinitus, presumably in 255 or in 256. Consequently, Aurelian was sent to Nicopolis with 1,650 light cavalry (Itureans, Armenians, Arabs, Saracens, and Mesopotamian auxiliaries), 800 *equites cataphractus*, and *Legio III Felix*,²⁴ together with the Germanic chieftains Hariomundus, Haldagates, Hildomundus and Charioviscus with their retinues. He had the duty of finding out where the enemy's wagon train was and how great their forces were and of what kind. Despite the fact that Aurelian was expected only to reconnoitre he seems to have acted on his own initiative and surprised the enemy in its encampment, most likely with a sudden cavalry attack. He is said to have restored the frontiers; distributed booty among the soldiers; enriched Thrace with captured cattle, horses and slaves; dedicated spoils in the Palace (the emperor's spoils); and brought to Valerian's private estate 500 slaves, 2,000 cows, 1,000 mares, 10,000 sheep, and 15,000 goats. This was the emperor's portion of the loot. In other words, Aurelian must have caught the enemy unprepared with a surprise attack. In addition to this, he seems to have crossed the Danube and destroyed several enemy encampments and settlements inside enemy territory. After this success, Valerian rewarded him with all kinds of crowns (at the time, the close equivalents to medals of honour) and other rewards.

The list of rewards includes: four mural crowns/*coronae* (given for scaling an enemy wall first); five rampart crowns (forcing a way into an enemy camp); two naval crowns (boarding an enemy vessel first); two civic crowns (saving the life of a citizen); ten spears (*hastae*) without points; four bi-coloured *vexilla*-banners; four red tunics of the *duces*; two proconsular cloaks; a bordered toga; a tunic with palms; a gold embroidered toga; and an ivory-chair. The list of honours and crowns suggests that Aurelian probably engaged five enemy forces separately and destroyed their camps. It is probable that most of these destroyed enemy camps meant separate enemy forces invading Roman territory. The naval and mural crowns suggest that Aurelian crossed the Danube and boarded some enemy vessels (boats or ships) when doing that. The boats would presumably have belonged to those tribes (included at least the Bastarnae and Peuci) that lived along the Danube. The four mural crowns mean that Aurelian destroyed four enemy settlements on the other side of the Danube, probably somewhere east of the Roman Dacia.

The main reward, however, was his appointment to the position of inspector of army camps at a meeting of officers at Byzantium, either

in 255 when Valerian was there or passing through it or in 256 if Valerian stayed in the Balkans until the spring or early summer of 256. Aurelian was also adopted into a senatorial family. According to the *HA*, Aurelian was also appointed consul, undoubtedly honorary consul, and given enough money to act according to his new status.²⁵ Modern historians have needlessly suspected this statement. It is just as plausible that Aurelian had been given the honorary position of a consulship as it is for an Herulian chieftain to become appointed consul by Gallienus. We do not know the names of all the consuls of the period.

On the basis of the *Historia Augusta* (*Probus* 5), it is also possible to deduce that it was in 255 or 256 that the aforementioned tribune Probus distinguished himself against the Sarmatians and Quadi. This suggests a probability that the entire Illyrian and Thracian frontier was simultaneously invaded by enemies so that when the above-mentioned Crinitus was ill, Aurelian fought in Thrace while Probus fought in Illyricum. The *Augustan History* claims that Probus was presented with several rewards in front of an assembly (possibly in the assembly held at Byzantium mentioned below). The rewards included: four *hastae* (spears) without points; two rampart *coronae*-crowns; one civic crown; two golden *armillae* (highest grade bracelets given for bravery); and a golden *torque* (a neck-ring given for bravery). The civic crown was given to Probus personally by Valerian for having saved his kinsman Valerius Flaccinus from the hands of the Quadi. Once again Flaccinus is unknown and the information has therefore been considered suspect, and once again I will have to note that the information provided by the text is in agreement with other events taking place in the area as a result of which I am taking the liberty of accepting it as likely. Of note is also the presence of a relative of Valerian in the Balkans, which lends support for the suggestion that Valerian and Decius were somehow related. The information given above suggests that Probus probably engaged at least the Quadi when they were already returning back to their home territory with their loot, that included Valerius Flaccinus. The fact that the list includes two rampart crowns suggests that Probus destroyed two separate enemy forces operating within Roman territory, but did not cross into enemy territory like Aurelian evidently did on the basis of the four mural crowns and two naval crowns that he received. It was then presumably thanks to this that Probus was given command of *legio III Felix* when Aurelian was promoted to the position of inspector of army camps. If the legion remained in the area where it had served under

Aurelian, then Probus was transferred to Thrace.

According to the *HA*, when Valerian held court in the public baths of Byzantium, presumably in 255 or 256, he convened the officers and officials of the eastern half of the empire for a council. It is not known whether Valerian had already made Byzantium a major military base of operations for the land and naval forces at this time. What appears certain, however, is that if he had, this was not enough because he dispatched reinforcements there later in 257 (see below). The *HA* claims that the officials of the Palace present included ordinary consul Nummius Tuscus; praetorian prefect Baebius Macer; governor of the east Quintus Ancharius; *dux* of the Scythian limes/frontier Avulnius Saturninus; recently-appointed to govern Egypt (presumably as prefect) Murrentius Mauricius; *dux* of the eastern limes/frontier Julius Trypho; *dux* of the Illyrian and Thracian frontiers Ulpius Crinitus; and *dux* of the Raetian frontier Fulvius Boius. None of the names is known from other sources and it is because of this that the information given by the *HA* is thought to be fictitious, but in the absence of any concrete contradictory evidence I have here accepted it as possible. We simply do not know enough of the period to dismiss evidence solely on the basis of our modern scepticism. According to the information given, it was in this meeting that Valerian and Crinitus both thanked Aurelian and made him the above-mentioned consul and raised him into the senatorial class. The timing of the meeting and the dating of the probably-fictitious letter from Valerian to Ceionius Albinus, Prefect of the City, does lend support for this. It is probable that the person in question was M. Nummius Ceionius Annius Albinus, who is likely to have been the Nummius Albinus who was indeed the Prefect of the City in 256. It is unfortunate that the *HA* fails to discuss what other decisions were taken at that time.²⁶ It is also possible that the above-mentioned rewards to Probus were given on this same occasion.

My own educated guess is that one of the decisions was to appoint Claudius (the future emperor) as successor of Crinitus for the year 256. According to the *HA* (Claud. 15), Valerian appointed Claudius as the *dux totius Illyrici*, in charge of the armies of Thrace, Moesia, Dalmatia, Pannonia, and Dacia.²⁷ The reason is that this appointment must have preceded the appointment of Ingenuus, who was certainly appointed to take command of the Balkan front at the same time as Valerian and Gallienus spent time together in late 256 and early 257. The resultant conclusion is due to the fact that the *HA* (TR 10.14)

claims that Valerian was the man behind the promotions of Claudius, Macrianus, Ingenuus, Regalianus and Postumus. The circumstantial evidence supports this claim. For example, it is clear that the appointment of Ingenuus took place in the presence of Gallienus' wife Salonina.

5.6 African Wars 253–260

28

One of the first things Gallienus did concerning North Africa appears to have been to reconstitute *Legio III Augusta* in 253. This seems to have led to the recommencement of war in the area. The probable reason for this is that the Berbers had in the meanwhile taken over the outermost sections of the former Roman territory, with the result that the arrival of the legion threatened these areas. Indeed, it is probable that the whole purpose was to retake the land previously lost to the Berbers and the arrival of the legion certainly helped in that it changed the balance of power to the detriment of the Berbers. And, we should not forget that at the same time there was 'plague', which ravaged Africa particularly badly during the years 252–254. Consequently, it is clear that the economy of the area suffered terribly during the 250s.

The area of conflict can be divided roughly into two separate wars: 1) the War in Mauretania Tingitana, probably vs. the Baquates and Autololes; and 2) the War in Mauretania Caesarensis, Numidia and Africa against the Quinquegentanei and Faraxen. The former lasted at least from 254 until 259, and the latter from about 253/4 until about 260. According to the inscription found in the region of Auzia in Mauretania Caesarensis (dated either to 254 by Bohec or to 255 by Saxer), the *Defensor Provinciae* P. Aelius Primianus engaged and defeated the enemy with the *Equites Maurorum*. According to another inscription from Auzia (dated to 260 by Saxer and a little before 260 by Bohec), Q. Gargilius Martialis, who commanded the *vexillatio Equitum Maurorum* and *Coh. I Aelia*, was killed by the Bavares (he had been active in Africa previously during the reign of Alexander Severus). The problem was so serious that Gallienus appointed M. Cornelius Octavianus as *Dux per Africam, Numidia Mauretaniumque* in about 258, a command which basically united all of the forces of Africa, Numidia and Mauretania under him. According to still another inscription found at Lambaesis, the legate (undoubtedly of the *LG III Aug.*) C. Macrinus Decianus defeated the Bavares, Quinquegentanei

and the Fraxinenses (Faraxen) at some unknown point in time (259/260?). Consequently, the war in Africa continued well into the sole reign of Gallienus.

The *HA* (TR. 29) also suggests that the Libyan frontier was facing similar troubles during this era, because it claims that a certain Fabius Pomponianus was acting as the *Dux Limitis Libyci* in about 260/2, which once again suggests the uniting of forces under one commander for the purpose of facing a dangerous foe, in this case probably consisting of the Garamantes and Marmaridae. The *HA* (TR 29) also claims that this Pomponianus and Vibius Bassianus (proconsul of Africa) raised Celsus to the throne in North Africa after Gallienus became the sole emperor, and which rebellion was soon crushed by Gallienus' unknown female cousin Galliena. If true, the dating of this event is still uncertain. It is possible that it took place in about 261/262 or in about 264/265: for further discussion, see the narrative. Egypt also saw a series of problems during this period. The papyri attest the existence of two *correctores* for the years 257 and 258, which suggests serious problems with neighbours to the south (probably the Blemmyes).²⁹ It is clear that the whole of North Africa from the Atlantic to the Nile was facing a series of troubles at this time possibly resulting from climate change in the area.

5.7 Valerian's Reorganization of the Empire in 256 and Gallienus

In August 256, the emperors Valerian and Gallienus met each other at Cologne to discuss future strategy. Valerian wanted to solve the problem of the division of power and duties of defence. His purpose was to once and for all correct the situation in the east. Valerian's strategy was based on a specific division of duties. Valerian would take care of the Persians, Gallienus of the Rhine frontier and Italy, while Valerian Jr. would act as a figurehead on the Danube frontier under Ingenuus' tutelage. The appointment of Ingenuus as *dux* of the Danubian frontier meant the transferral of Claudius to serve under Gallienus. According to the fragment of the anonymous continuator of Dio,³⁰ the empress Salonina said to one Valentine that she distrusted the expression on the face of Ingenuus and continued that she approved the emperor's choice of him (Valentine) and pleaded him to watch the man. Valentine promised to do so. In other words, Valentine was probably a *frumentarius*, a member of the emperor's 'secret service'. Valerian left Postumus with Gallienus and appointed him as *dux* of the Rhine frontier. Other commanders left in the

frontier army of Gaul under Postumus were probably Laelianus (Lollianus), Marius, Victorinus, and Tetricus. In addition, there were the generals belonging to the personal army of Gallienus. In fact, in 257 and/or 258, Gallienus minted coins with the legend '*Gallienus cum exercitu suo*' to celebrate his own personal army. In 257–258, his generals included, among others, probably at least Theodotus, Aureolus and Claudius.³¹

Because of the troubles Gallienus was facing on the Rhine frontier, it is probable that Valerian had given Gallienus reinforcements which included some units from the east and probably also some Dalmatian cavalry together with Claudius. It is clear that Claudius had been transferred to Gaul, because the sources (e.g. Peter the Patrician F181) show that he was later present at the Battle of Mursa. It is also possible that as a native Illyrian he may also have served as the commander of the Dalmatian cavalry, just like later the other native Illyrian, the future emperor Aurelian. It is also possible (even if this is not specifically mentioned by any source) that Valerian gave Gallienus instructions to leave his second son Saloninus in Gaul, if he had to move elsewhere, but it is also possible that this was Gallienus' own quite badly misplaced idea.

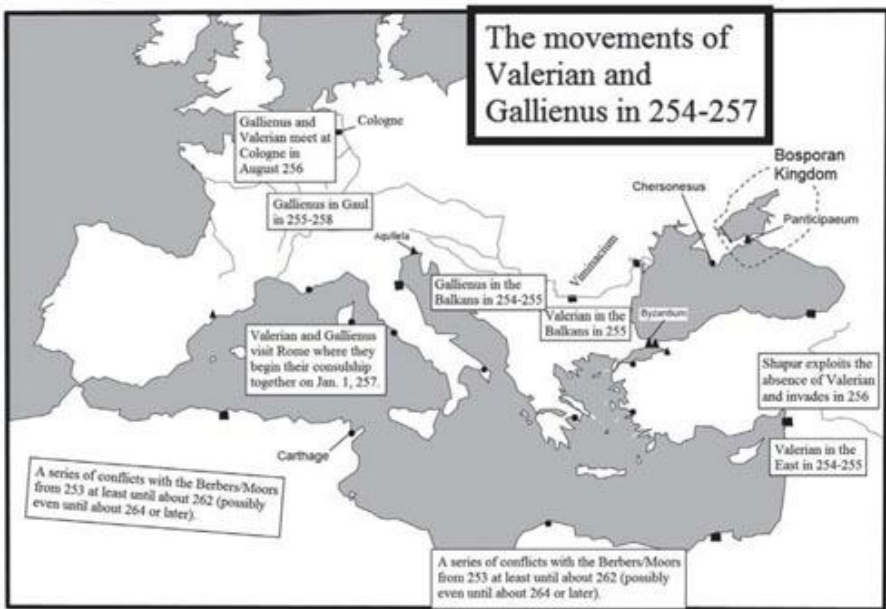
Valerian also needed money for his forthcoming military adventure. He began by collecting taxes for the forthcoming campaign and it was probably at least partially for this purpose that he started to persecute the Christians. However, it is also alleged that Macrianus, Valerian's 'finance minister' for the eastern campaign (Count of the Treasuries/*comes largitionum* and Supervisor of the Military Rations/*praepositus annonae*), induced Valerian to begin anew the persecution of Christians. Valerian and Macrianus undoubtedly wanted to confiscate their money, but Macrianus may also have had other more nefarious reasons for his attack. The Christian sources and the *Historia Augusta* both allege that he was a pagan magician. Whatever the truth, it is still clear that as a close friend of Decius, Valerian must have been very hostile towards the Christians to begin with and would certainly not have needed much urging to renew the persecution. Gallienus evidently opposed this policy of persecution, but had to agree to his father's will. Valerian gave the Edict against the Christians while he was at Rome in 257. What was new about it was that it was directed solely against the Christians. The Christian clergy were to be arrested and forced to sacrifice. If they did not, they were imprisoned or exiled. Christian gatherings were banned and they were not allowed to use

cemeteries. The Senate was puzzled and asked further instructions regarding the large numbers of imprisoned Christians after Valerian had already left Rome. Valerian's answer was that those leading Christians (including Christian senators) who refused to abandon faith lost their property and if they still persisted in their faith they were to be executed. High-ranking women were to lose their property, and members of the palace bureaucracy were to be enslaved and sent to the mines. In addition, Valerian collected reinforcements from Europe for his forthcoming eastern campaign and therefore left his son the unenviable task of protecting the European frontiers with even fewer men than before, on which see the list of troops under Valerian below at the Battle of Edessa in 259.³²

However, it is possible that Gallienus' task was not quite as difficult as seems at first glance. As noted above, it is quite likely even if not mentioned by the sources that when Valerian arrived in Gaul that he had brought with him some eastern cavalry detachments to bolster the numbers of mounted archers in Gallienus' cavalry army, even further because these were considered particularly useful in conflicts against the Germans. Just as in the sixth century, the Romans sought to adapt their army to oppose the enemy in the best possible way. The use of mounted archers against the Germans was not a new phenomenon at the time of the writing of the *Strategikon*. Octavian Augustus had employed Parthian and other cavalry with great success in his German campaigns. Similarly, Alexander Severus had brought with him the Oshroeni mounted archers and Moorish javelineers for use against the Germans, and his successor Maximinus Thrax had then employed them with great success. The Romans had already found out the usefulness of cavalry against the Germans during the first century ad, because it had enabled them to fight more efficiently against the Germans in the swampy terrain favoured by the latter.³³

5.8 Invasions of the Caucasus, Asia Minor and the Balkans in 256–257

The Borani, Goths, Carpi and Burgundi exploited the absence of Gallienus and Valerian from the Balkans in 256, just as did the Persians. However, for once the commanders left behind to guard the Danube and Asia Minor did so successfully and did not attempt an usurpation. The Borani managed to persuade the Crimean Bosporans to ferry them into Asia in their ships and disembark them close to the city of Pityus on the coast of modern Georgia. We do not know whether the Romans also lost their naval bases in Crimea and Sea of Azov at this time, but it appears probable that they managed to hold on at least to the city of Cherson, while it is likely that they lost those bases which were located in the Bosporan Kingdom. However, on the basis of Zosimus, the local commander at Pityus, Successianus, was very successful in the defence of his city and routed the enemy utterly. The Borani were in grave trouble, as the Bosporans had already sailed home. They were forced to collect whatever boats they could lay their hands on in order to be able to flee. Successianus' success caught the attention of Valerian after he had already reached Antioch in 257. As a reward, Successianus was appointed as Praetorian Prefect by Valerian with the mission to repair the city of Antioch.³⁴



Evidently, the other local commanders in the Balkans left behind by Gallienus and then by Valerian had also been at least equally successful during the absence of the emperors. Ingenuus became the guardian of Valerian Jr. and de facto commander of the armies of the Danube frontier. After settling affairs in the Balkans and Asia Minor to his satisfaction, Valerian proceeded to Antioch to begin his eastern war. However, the Goths were by no means yet subdued.

In 257

AD

the Borani repeated their naval raid, but this time they did not allow the Bosphorans to go home as before. They anchored near the Phasis River, where they tried in vain to capture the temple of Artemis Phasiana. From there they advanced to besiege Pityus, which this time they captured easily. Now that they had plenty of ships and prisoners skilled in rowing and calm weather almost all summer long, they sailed for the large and populous city of Trapezus. Its population was further swelled by country-dwellers who flocked to the safety of its double walls and a garrison that had been reinforced with 10,000 extra troops. However, when the Borani observed that soldiers inside were overconfident, lazy and much too fond of drinking, they piled trees against the wall and climbed up a few at a time during the night. The soldiers were caught asleep, with the result that they panicked, and although some managed to escape through the city gates, most were killed. As a result, the Borani got an immense amount of booty,

money and slaves and were also able to ravage the surrounding area unhindered. These events show that morale cannot have been very high among the Roman garrisons in the Caucasus and Asia Minor. This city was also one of the main bases of the Black Sea Fleet called the *Classis Pontica* (HQ at Cyzicus) which means that its destruction and the loss of its ships was a major blow to Roman naval strength.³⁵

There appears to have been three major causes for the invasions of the Balkans and Asia Minor by the Carpi, Sarmatians, Goths, Heruli, Vandals and Borani. The first of these had been the cessation of the payments to them by the emperor Philip the Arab. The second of these was the apparent weakness of the Roman defences. The third probable reason could have been the rise of a nomadic confederacy of tribes (most likely the neo-Xiongnu/Huns) somewhere in Central Asia. The fourth, and probably one of the most important reasons, seems to have been the appearance of a virulent plague in the steppes of Ukraine. In fact, the plague may have been caused by very unwise 'bacteriological warfare' by the Romans, if the Christian Philip the Arab had followed the advice of another Christian writer Julius Africanus! In truth it appears quite probable that at this time the Romans were experimenting with the use of diseases in warfare without fully understanding the implications. Regardless of the origin of the plague (it is usually thought to have have originated in Asia from where it came to the rest of the Roman Empire via Egypt, but an African origin is also possible), it created just the right conditions for a mass movement of peoples towards the Roman Empire. Whole barbarian societies were in great turmoil. The fifth reason, and possibly the decisive reason, was the migration of Odin's folk westward, which seems to have taken place roughly at this time – if my speculations regarding it are correct.³⁶

There were now large numbers of warriors who were desperate enough to attack the empire despite the odds, and they attacked again and again even after being defeated. However, they also had one major advantage in their favour. They brought with them the plague, which at the same time decimated the opposing Roman armies and civilian population and thereby weakened the defenders and at the same time freed land for them to settle in. In addition, the simultaneous Roman civil wars and Persian wars also created the right conditions for the barbarians to invade. Consequently, the border areas were depopulated as a result of the barbarian invasions, the plague and civil wars. As a result, the emperors even resettled

barbarians within the Empire to repopulate these ravaged border areas.

In addition, the spread of the plague and the movement of peoples also pushed other peoples towards the empire. The Alamanni and Luthungi appear to have started their mass movement away from the Danube regions towards Italy and Gaul, possibly immediately after they had caught the plague because they apparently brought the disease with them to Italy in about 259–260. One may also suspect that the Franks also started their mass movement in the north as a result of the spread of the plague plus the invasion of their territory by the followers of Odin the Man who pretended to be a god. The same may also be true of the Angles and Saxons.

The Persians had managed to assassinate Khosrov the Great, the king of Armenia, in about 255–256 which can be dated roughly to this period on the basis of their campaign in Cappadocia mentioned in the SKZ. They exploited their success by uniting the Armenian forces with theirs. At about the same time as this happened they also launched an invasion of Roman territory in Mesopotamia and Syria as also mentioned by the SKZ. It is possible that it was in 256 rather than earlier in 252/3 that Shapur besieged and occupied Dura Europus, but on balance the earlier date would seem preferable. Valerian's initial response was to move to Antioch in about 257 which blocked the Persian advance into Syria, and then march from there to Cappadocia to block the Perso-Armenian invasion advancing via Little Armenia: see below.³⁷

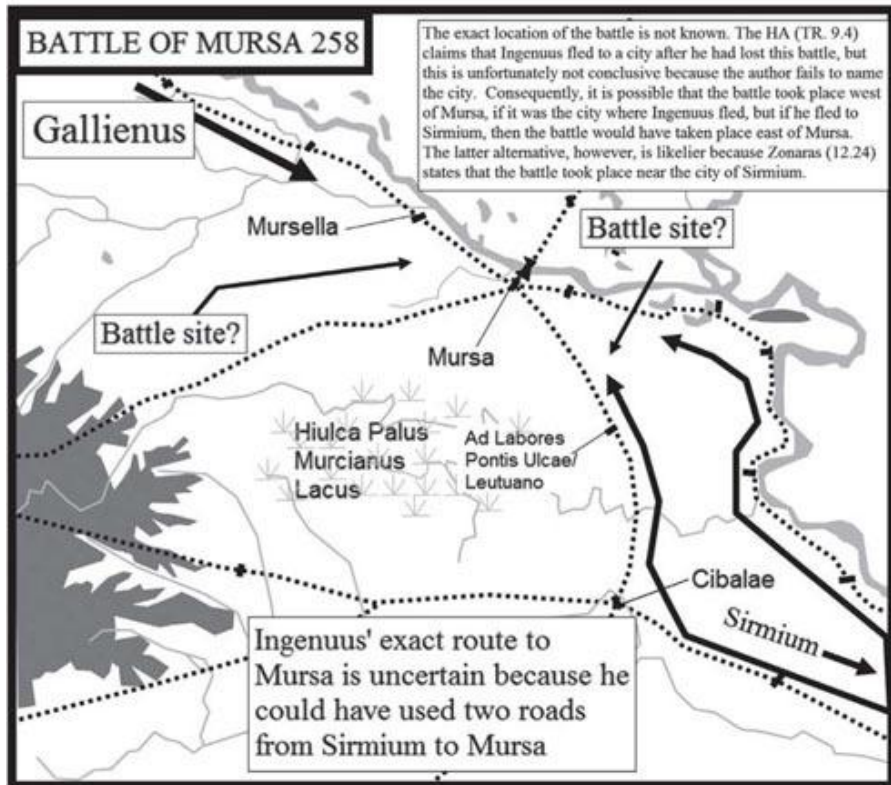
5.9 Ingenuus' Usurpation and the Battle of Mursa in 258 (or 259?)

In contrast to most other commanders, Ingenuus appears to have been very successful in his defence of the Danube frontier during the year 257–258. According to the *Historia Augusta* (TR., 9.2), Ingenuus seized power in 258 because he feared that he was becoming an object of suspicion to the emperors thanks to his military successes. These successes also prove that the emperors had allocated a large number of troops to Ingenuus, which made his revolt all the more dangerous. If it was the report (or reports) of the *frumentarius* Valentine, who had been attached to the staff of Ingenuus, that had aroused these suspicions, then it is entirely possible that the revolt had actually been caused by these reports if Ingenuus had learned of their contents. However, it is also possible that the suspicions were not without foundation to begin with. Ingenuus may have been disloyal from the

start. The suspicions of Salonina toward Ingenuus preserved in the text of Peter the Patrician certainly imply this. The fact that Ingenuus evidently did not even have enough time to mint his own coins before Gallienus attacked, suggests strongly that Gallienus had been informed of Ingenuus' plans very soon after the fact. In fact, taken together, the version of the revolt of Ingenuus in *Historia Augusta* is entirely plausible.

Whatever the truth, Ingenuus apparently killed the younger Valerian and raised the flag of revolt in about 258 (the consulship of Tuscus and Bassus) if we are to believe the *HA*.³⁸ The dating of the revolt, however, is not secure, since some sources claim that the usurpation took place after the capture of Valerian by the Persians. Many historians therefore believe that Ingenuus' usurpation took place later, either in 259 or even in 260. In my opinion, the year 259 is plausible if one accepts the date of 259 for the capture of Valerian and makes the assumption that the *HA* has mistaken the consulship of Tuscus and Bassus in 258 with that of Aemilianus and Bassus in 259, but the year 260 is too late because that would leave too little time for Gallienus to crush the revolt of Regalianus and then move to Gaul against the Franks and then against the Alamanni in Italy and then against Postumus in Gaul, all in 260. My own educated guess, however, is that the year 258 mentioned by the *HA* still remains the likeliest date for the revolt because Gallienus faced the above-mentioned revolt of Regalianus, invasion of Gaul by the Franks and Alamanni, invasion of Italy by the Alamanni/Iuthungi/Semnones and the revolt of Postumus all before autumn 260. There had to be enough time for Gallienus to move from one front to another, which means that the earlier date for the revolt of Ingenuus is to be preferred.³⁹

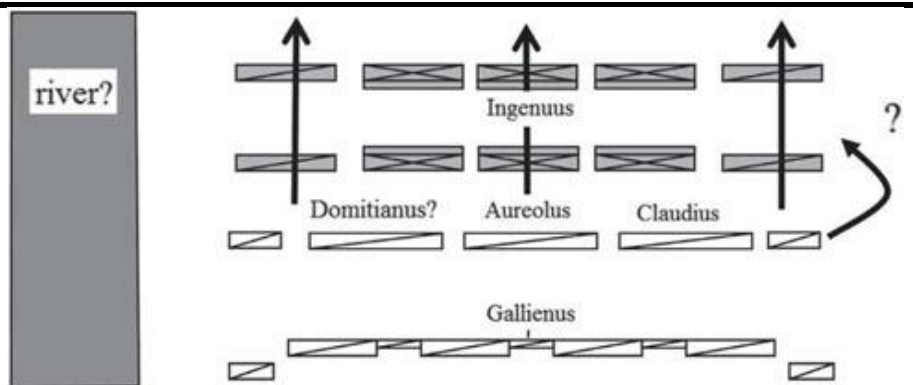
When Gallienus learnt of the death of his son, he was naturally enraged beyond belief. It is therefore unsurprising that he acted with his typical celerity in this case. He appears to have elevated his son Saloninus immediately to the position of Caesar and left Albanus/Silvanus as his guardian, while he retained Postumus as commander of the Rhine frontier. It is probable that Valerian had given Gallienus instructions to have a member of the imperial family on every frontier to foment loyalty among the soldiers, but the evidence for this is still uncertain. All that we know is that Valerian (*HA TR* 10.14) was behind the promotion of Postumus and that these figurehead rulers were used while Valerian was still alive but not after him.



Gallienus himself advanced as fast as possible against the usurper, who evidently did not even have enough time to mint coins to declare his usurpation before his arrival. According to Zonaras (12.24), Gallienus' army included among others the Moorish horsemen. The armies met close to Mursa, which lay about 80 km North-West from Sirmium, or even nearer to Sirmium because Zonaras claims that the battle took place close to Sirmium. I have here accepted Mursa as the likely locale. It is impossible to know which routes the armies took to reach Mursa, but certain educated guesses can be made. It is probable that Ingenuus marched from Sirmium to Cibalae or near it, where there was a strategic crossroads, where he then waited until it became apparent which route the enemy would take. There were basically two alternatives: 1) Gallienus together with Aureolus could have marched from Aquileia via Emona and Siscia to Mursa; or 2) from Aquileia via Poetovio to Mursa. The latter is the likeliest alternative, for Poetovio possessed a sizable garrison and had the emperor taken the former route Ingenuus could have intercepted his army well before Mursa.

The Battle of Mursa 258

Gallienus' ca.30,000-40,000 equites vs. Ingenuus' c.50,000-60,000 infantry and cavalry in 258 ad The hypothetical diagram of the battle shows the probable deployment of the armies. Gallienus' first line probably consisted of the left-wing legionary cavalry vexillations, the centre of Germanic/Sarmatian Federates, and the right wing of Dalmatian cavalry (Illyrikiani). The reserve consisted at least of the Optimates, which included the Moorish cavalry guards under Gallienus. The mixed force of Ingenuus must have had at least about 50,000-60,000 infantry and cavalry for him to contemplate an usurpation. However, Ingenuus' army was clearly unprepared to face the shock of at least 15,000 horsemen charging straight at them. His army collapsed immediately after the cavalry attack had caused very significant numbers of casualties among the defenders. This means that it collapsed at the first charge. Since Claudius was rewarded as a result of this battle, it is possible that he may have used ambushers on the open side but these are not included in the illustrations because the sources do not mention such. It is entirely possible that he was rewarded for his bravery (i.e. because of the wound he had received). It is not known whether either of the armies rested their flank against the river, but that is certainly a possibility in light of the location. It is also very probable that Gallienus' cavalry was able to outflank both enemy flanks (if the armies were not deployed close to the river) or at least the enemy's left wing thanks to the superior numbers of elite cavalry. Gallienus' superiority in cavalry would have made it impossible for the cavalry of Ingenuus to prevent this.



The battle was a vindication of Gallienus' strategy to rely on cavalry. According to Zonaras (12.24), Gallienus had taken to the field with the other soldiers and the Moors while the *hipparchos* (cavalry commander, '*hipparchôn gennaiôs*') Aureolus commanded the cavalry

corps ('*tôn hippôn*').⁴⁰ The cavalry fought well under the *hipparchos* Aureolus, slaughtering large numbers of the enemy and routing the rest. When one combines this information with the information provided by the *Strategikon* of the various ways in which cavalry battles progressed, this suggests strongly that the battle was won by the first cavalry line alone because as second-in-command (*hypostrategos*) to the *strategos* Gallienus, Aureolus would have commanded the first cavalry line.⁴¹ Ingenuus was either killed by his own guards in his flight (Zon. 12.24), or committed suicide by drowning himself in the river when the enemy captured the city (Mursa or Sirmium?) where he had fled after the battle (*HA TR* 9.4).

The future emperor Claudius also distinguished himself in this battle. According to the Continuator of Dio (Müller, vol. 1, p.194; Peter the Patrician f.181), after the battle Gallienus inquired of a soldier about the health of Claudius because he had been wounded in combat. The soldier replied that Claudius had fought like Achilles and was now resting in his tent, to which Gallienus replied that they both had indeed been wounded in the heel. Does this mean that Claudius had also been wounded by an arrow? It is very unfortunate that the fragment does not tell us more.

In spite of the fact that the sources do not give us other details than that Aureolus won the battle with his cavalry and that Claudius was wounded in the heel, it appears very likely that the battle was won solely with cavalry. As already noted, on the basis of military probability provided by the *Strategikon* the most likely course of events appears to have been that Aureolus, being the second-in-command, had led the cavalry charge. In that case, Claudius, who was wounded, was one of the divisional commanders, most likely in command of the right wing where the *Strategikon* places the so-called *Illyriciani* cavalry because Claudius was a native of this area. Gallienus as *strategos* (overall commander/general) would have been in the centre of the second line. Zonaras' text suggests that he commanded the Moors in person. This suggests strongly that not only the first line under Aureolus, but also the reserves under Gallienus consisted of cavalry in the manner described by the *Strategikon*. It is probable that at least those closest to Gallienus would have consisted of the elite Moorish Cavalry Guards that had been in existence at least from the reign of Commodus onwards.⁴² These would probably have been posted where we find the *Optimates* in the *Strategikon*. In other words, it is very likely that the *Optimates* (the best) consisted of the elite

bodyguard units, which included the Moors. On the basis of the sources Gallienus' infantry did not play any role in the battle, but it is still possible or even probable that at least some footmen accompanied the army – if present these would have been left behind to protect that marching camp and its baggage train.

The accompanying two tomb reliefs show well how the Romans had always taught their horses and horsemen how to charge straight at enemy infantry and how to run over enemy infantry formations if these were not disciplined enough to withstand this. If the enemy infantry was disciplined and had assumed close order, this tactic was not usually used because most of the horses would still have bolted if the horseman attempted to charge at this solid-looking infantry array. However, this sort of 'lawnmower' tactic was definitely used by Gallienus' cavalry at this battle. The fact that the enemy infantry collapsed at the first charge proves that its morale was not high. This is a reflection of the series of defeats suffered by the Balkan armies. The defeats caused by the wildly charging Gothic cavalry of Kniva must have been quite fresh in the memories of the men. The use of the 'lawnmower' tactic did not require the horses to be equipped with armour, but it is still clear that at least some of the horses were equipped with chest and head protection as described by Arrian in the context of cavalry training. It is also clear that the horses of those units which consisted of easterners (Oshroenians, Parthians/ Persians, Armenians, etc.) and Sarmatians (see the accompanying illustration) were more fully armoured than the regular cavalry. Mielczarek (pp.73–76) lists all the known 'cataphracted' units of this period and also notes the instances in which the *cataphracti milites/equites cataphractarios/cataphracti milites* are mentioned in the *HA*. On the basis of this, it is certain that there were significant numbers of *cataphractarii* in the Roman cavalry at the time of Gallienus' reign. Regardless, it is still clear that the vast majority of Roman horses were not armoured, or had only chest and head protection. Note also that despite the fact that most Roman cavalry tomb reliefs etc. fail to depict bows, the Romans trained their cavalry to be competent not only with the javelins, spears and swords but also in mounted archery with bows and crossbows (see Arrian, *technē Taktika*, 34.1–44.2 with my analysis in *Caracalla*). In other words, Gallienus could equip his men for any combat duty he thought necessary.

Left: Signifer Q. Carminius, Worms

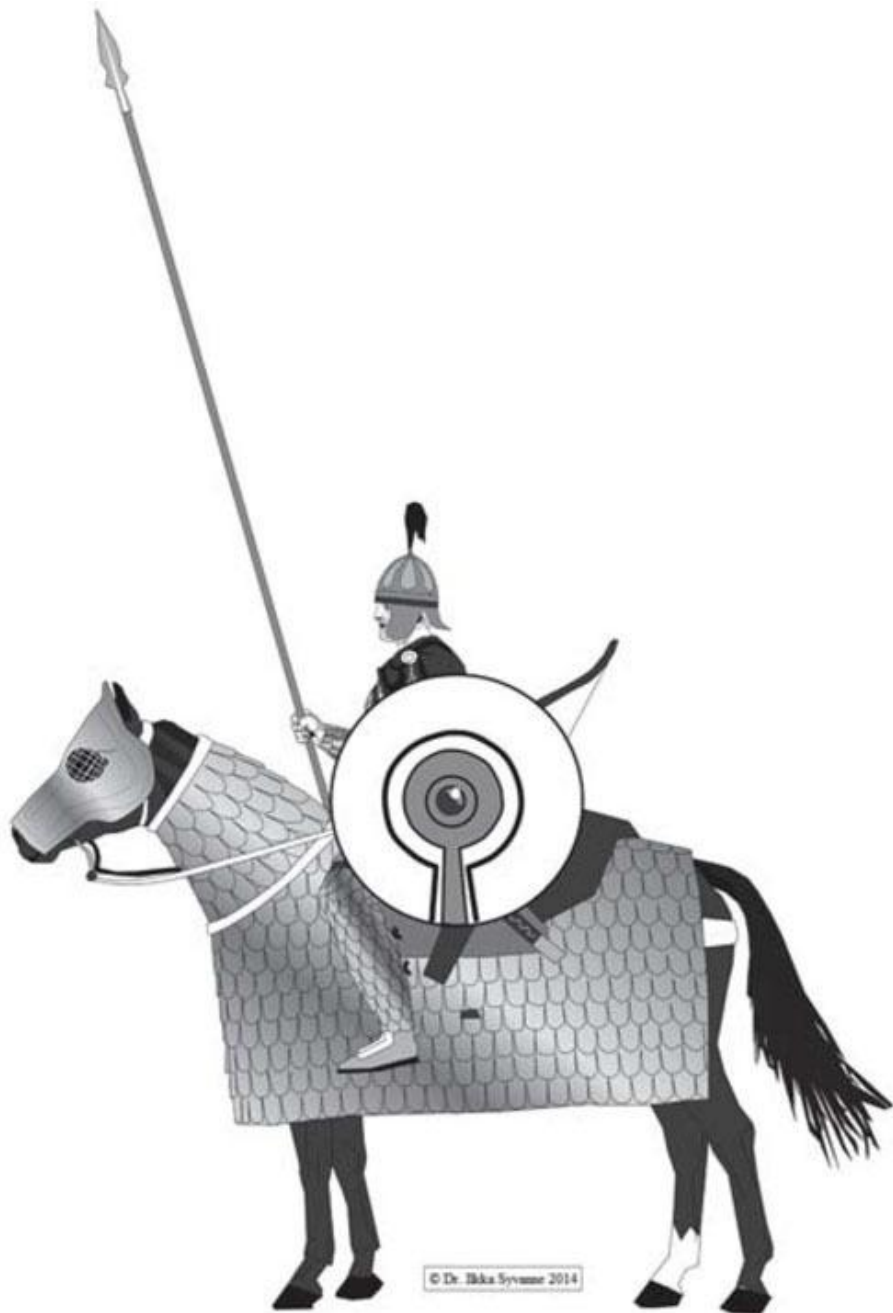
Q(uinto) Carminio Ingenuo Equiti Alae Hispanorum stip(endiorum) XXV

Signifero, Sacer Julius (h(ere) e(x) t(testamento)).

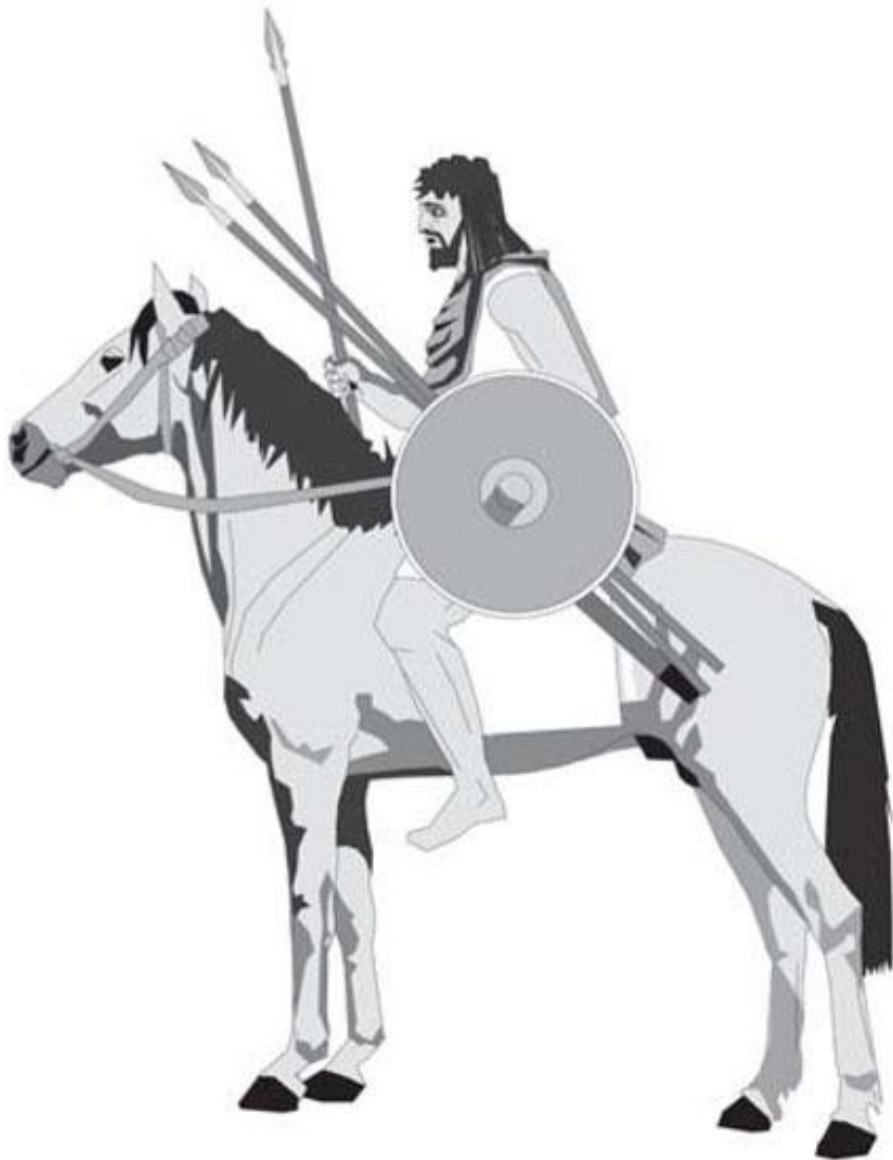
Right: C. Romanus, Mainz

C(aius) Romanus equ(es) Alae Norico(rum) Claud(ia tribu) Capito, Caleia, an(norum) XL stip(endiorum) XIX h(ic) s(itus) e(st) h(eres) ex t(estamento) f(aciendum) c(uravit). Illustrations drawn after Lindenschmit.





A Sarmatian in Roman service equipped as a cataphract. The shield emblem is taken from the *Notitia Dignitatum* and should not therefore be taken to be representative of a third century emblem.



A typical Moorish/Berber horseman on the basis of the extant works of art seated on a Berber horse (height 153 cm, bad tempered kickers, a hardy breed able to carry great weights). The Moors were best known as horse javeliners, but it is known that they also had mounted archers. It is unfortunate that we do not know the appearance of the Moors who belonged to the Imperial Horse Guards.

After this victory, Gallienus clamoured for revenge. His eldest son had been killed! He vented his anger by ordering his officers to kill every male, young and old, civilian and soldier, presumably in the area close to where the battle and pursuit of the enemy had taken place in

Pannonia and/or in Moesia.⁴³ According to the *Historia Augusta* (TR., 9.5ff.), Gallienus also ordered in a letter to a certain Verianus that he was to seek out and kill everyone who had spoken ill of Gallienus.⁴⁴ The veracity of this letter has been doubted, but its contents need not be. It is very likely that it gives us quite an accurate description of the order that Gallienus must have given to his chief *frumentarius* in the aftermath of the victory. The fact that Gallienus was ready to show mercy and compassion on some occasions does not preclude the brutal treatment of his enemies on this and other occasions – humans are capable of both types of behaviour. In fact, the often-used example taken from the fragment of the Continuator of Dio/Peter the Patrician shows that he had indeed ordered his soldiers to mutilate, kill and slaughter.⁴⁵ According to this fragment, after the battle of Mursa one soldier dragged a prisoner in front of the emperor and then said that the prisoner was his own brother.

Gallienus praised the soldier, promised him reward and pardoned his brother. But the soldier said that no-one who had borne arms against the emperor should be allowed to live and then drew his sword and killed his own brother. Gallienus is said to have been very angry at this crime, but still thought it best not to interfere. In actual fact, this instance shows that the soldiers had been ordered to kill the prisoners and that the soldier in question foolishly thought that the emperor would therefore be particularly pleased by his actions, this at a time when the emperor was mourning the death of his own son. Gallienus was a father who loved his family and relations dearly and he was certainly not happy to see such brutality towards a close relation!

It is unfortunate that the *Historia Augusta* does not state where Probus was at this time because on the basis of the previous information (*Probus* 5), it is probable that he had been transferred to Thrace, but probably not to Dacia because its forces had participated in the usurpations (see later). However, since the *HA* (*Probus* 6) refers to the loyalty demonstrated by Probus, it is likely that if he was still serving in Thrace he did not join the revolt of Ingenuus. This would mean that Gallienus did not have to extend the purge of the enemies there. It would probably have been thanks to this loyalty that Probus was then transferred to the personal army of Gallienus (see the following analysis).

It is possible that Gallienus celebrated his victory over Ingenuus (and possibly also over Regalianus, see below) with coins struck in Rome and Siscia in 259. These coins portray Gallienus carrying a

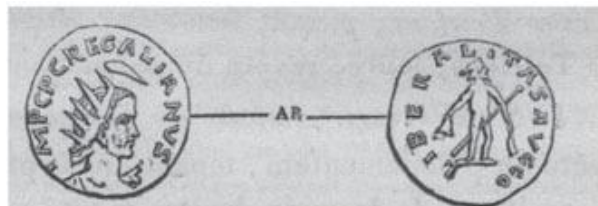
spear and *parazonium* (a short sword with an eagle-handle) while standing between two river gods which are probably the Drave and the Save in Pannonia.⁴⁶

5.10 The Revolt of Regalianus in about 259–260

The dating of the revolt of Regalianus, the *dux* of Illyricum, is problematic because the *HA* (10) and Aurelius Victor (33) both imply that it took place very soon after the suppression of the revolt of Ingenuus. Both sources claim that Regalianus regrouped the remnants of Ingenuus' army and that these troops proclaimed Regalianus as emperor. On the other hand, the modern opinion usually holds that the revolts were separated by a considerable interval because Regalianus had enough time to mint coins.⁴⁷ In my opinion, these views can be reconciled. It is quite possible that the suppression of the remaining pockets of resistance took some time just as did the massacres of all those who were considered guilty. This would probably have taken most of the year 258 to accomplish. In addition to this, it is clear that the Sarmatians had enough time to invade Moesia before Regalianus usurped power. The typical time of the year for the Sarmatians to invade was winter because the freezing of the Danube allowed them to cross it without difficulties such as having to fight against the Roman naval forces that they potentially faced if they invaded during summer. Therefore, the interval between the revolts could have been considerable, while it could still have taken place in the aftermath of the revolt of Ingenuus if it took place roughly within a year of the suppression of that revolt.

The *Historia Augusta* (TR 10.9ff.) includes a letter from Claudius to Regalianus, *dux* of Illyria. The letter has usually been considered spurious, but its contents are entirely in accord with what we know and therefore it may actually be authentic in content, even if this may sound quite farfetched to some historians. In this letter, Claudius states that Bonitus and Celsus, the attendants of Gallienus (*stipatores principis nostri* = attendants/bodyguards of our emperor), had told him and the emperor how Regalianus had fought at Scupi successfully and how many battles he had fought in that single day with great speed (which implies a cavalry action). This suggests that at the time of the reading of the report Claudius was with Gallienus. Claudius is then claimed to have warned Regalianus to be more cautious in gaining victories in order that he would not arouse the suspicion of Gallienus of greater ambitions. Claudius also asked Regalianus to send

him some Sarmatian bows and two military cloaks. It is therefore quite probable that Claudius and Gallienus were no longer in the Balkans at the time Regalianus fought against the Sarmatians, but were already in Gaul to fight against the Franks, because it would be strange if Claudius and Gallienus would not have fought against the Sarmatians if they were in the area. My own educated guess is that this was the case and that Gallienus had given command of the armies of the Balkans to Regalianus (or at least Illyricum, the western portion of it) in 258.



A coin of Regalianus
(source: Delaroche,
1845)

To begin with, this suggests that the Sarmatians (possibly the Roxolani) had invaded during the winter of 258–9 and that Regalianus had successfully engaged them with cavalry somewhere near Scupi – a place very deep in Roman territory. This also suggests that Gallienus had left Regalianus enough men to defend the area even after the purges. It moreover implies that Claudius and his horsemen also used bows (and hence Gallienus’ *equites*) and that the Sarmatian bows were considered better than the regular issue, standard Roman composite bows. As a native of Illyria, commander of the Danubian armies, and commander of cavalry, Claudius undoubtedly knew the value of the Sarmatian bows. Secondly, if Regalianus had received this very same letter or some similar letter – as appears quite possible – then he had every reason to be fearful for his own life. He had witnessed what had happened to those that had aroused the suspicion of the emperors. If we are to believe the *Historia Augusta*, Gallienus had also placed *frumentarii* in the staff of Claudius himself.⁴⁸ This obviously means that Gallienus was also aware of the words of Claudius and of the possibility that Regalianus could be planning a revolt. In fact, it is possible that Claudius’ letter was intended as a light-hearted warning to Regalianus not to revolt or simply as a thoughtless jest in the manner of Gallienus. Gallienus was known for his frivolous jokes (including practical ones) and it is not beyond probability that his officers could join him in such merrymaking and would act in like manner even amongst themselves. It would have been quite natural behaviour for veteran soldiers to do – and is also practised by the soldiers of our own day to alleviate stress.

However, according to the *Historia Augusta* (TR 10) the actual revolt came about as a result of a very bad joke. When Regalianus was dining with some soldiers, a certain acting tribune is said to have asked the origins of the name Regalianus with the result that a schoolmaster began to decline grammatically, saying ‘*Rex, regis, regi, Regalianus*’. As a result some of the soldiers started to joke aloud whether that could mean that Regalianus was regal. If true, this undoubtedly sealed Regalianus’ fate. There was bad blood between the Pannonian and Moesian soldiers on the one hand and Gallienus on the other. Consequently, the soldiers wanted to raise their own emperor against Gallienus. Regalianus also knew that the soldiers’ joke spelled his death sentence when the *frumentarii* and *protectores* in his staff reported it to the emperor’s ears. Consequently, he was glad to accept the salutations next morning from the front rankers at some point in time in 259. It is of course possible that the joke mentioned by the *HA* was actually staged by Regalianus himself so that he could see how the officers and soldiers would react to it. However, according to the *HA* (TR 10), the prime movers in the revolt were the former soldiers of Ingenuus who were angry over the murder of their relatives in the purge launched by Gallienus. It is possible that the soldiers were eager to revolt and Regalianus equally eager to use this to his own benefit.

Regalianus collected together an army consisting of the remnants of Ingenuus’ army and of the Sarmatian Roxolani (either war prisoners or allies or both). Despite the fact that Regalianus had enough time to mint coins, which suggests premeditation, his revolt appears to have been very short and equally easily crushed. According to the *HA* (TR 10.1–2), the Roxolani Sarmatians instigated the murder of Regalianus with the support of the soldiers and provincials because these feared the revenge of Gallienus, which would probably have been even more brutal than the purge following the revolt of Ingenuus. I would suggest that the Roxolani were not enemy invaders as sometimes thought, but rather Sarmatians serving in the Roman army as mercenaries, as implied by the context. It was thanks to this that Regalianus was killed by his own men before Gallienus had the chance to do it himself.

It is unfortunate that the whereabouts of Gallienus at the time of the usurpation is not known with certainty, and neither is the exact timing of Regalianus’ revolt. On the basis of Zosimus (1.37), it is probable that the Franks had invaded Gaul in about 258–259 very

soon after Gallienus had marched against Ingenuus. It is there that we meet him at the time when he learns of the invasion of Italy by the Scythians/ Alamanni/ Iuthungi/Semnones (differently named in different sources) in 259–260.

It is very unfortunate that we do not know the exact sequence of events. What appears certain is that Gallienus was in Gaul at the beginning of 259, but what follows next is not known with certainty. It is possible that Gallienus advanced on the double against Regalianus in 259 and then, after Regalianus had been killed and the defences reorganized, he returned to Gaul in late summer or early autumn after which he fought against the Franks and Alamanni in Gaul in 259–260 before marching back to Italy and defeating the Alamanni near Milan in early spring 260. The other possibility is that Gallienus marched from Gaul against the Alamanni in Italy in 260 and then continued his march against Regalianus and then returned back to Italy and then from there to Gaul where he learnt of the usurpation of Postumus in August 260.

Unfortunately, both alternatives are equally feasible because the actions of Gallienus in the Balkans seem to have contributed to the revolt of Postumus. The sources prove that Gallienus reorganized the defences in Pannonia and along the Danube frontier. We do not know with certainty whether this took place immediately after the revolt of Ingenuus or after the revolt of Regalianus, but my own educated guess is that it took place after the latter revolt because the Pipa (see below) scandal must have been fresh when it caused troubles in 260 and because it (and the Marcomanni of her father) did not play any role in the revolt of Regalianus. Whatever the timing, it is clear that Gallienus recognized that Pannonia needed new blood and new soldiers after the ravaging of the territory by a variety of invaders and after the killing of so many Roman soldiers by these enemies and by Gallienus himself. He set out to correct this situation by concluding an alliance with the Marcomannic king Attalus probably in about 259 (or at the latest in very early 260). The Marcomanni were settled in one of the Pannonias with the responsibility to defend the frontier. In other words, they were to serve as *federates*. It is possible that these Marcomanni were actually Iuthungi, as the sources tend to confuse these two, or that Attalus was the king of a subtribe, or both. Gallienus sealed the alliance by marrying the daughter of the king called Pipa (or Pipara).⁴⁹

This was quite an unprecedented and scandalous thing for a Roman

emperor to do! But there may have been good reasons to do this: firstly, Gallienus wanted to secure the alliance; secondly, as a womanizer he may simply have lusted after the young (and presumably beautiful) blond; thirdly, he (with the approval of his wife Salonina, who appears to have accompanied him on his campaigns) may have wanted to sire more offspring after the death of his son; and fourthly, Gallienus was a man who did not respect traditions, he was an innovator. In fact, according to Aurelius Victor (33) and *Historia Augusta* (Gall. 16ff.), one of the reasons for the many uprisings against Gallienus was his way of life or the false rumours concerning his lifestyle. In the eyes of Roman law, the actual marital status of Pipa seems to have been simply that of a concubine and not that of a wife, as falsely claimed by Gallienus' opponents.⁵⁰ Gallienus had to quell the false rumours of barbarian marriage fast. In the case of Claudius, he was lucky because he could react in a timely fashion to clear up the misunderstanding (see below), but not so in the case of Postumus and others.

It is possible that at least part of the reorganization of the defensive structures in the Balkans which is detectable from epigraphical and other evidence for the 260s took place at the same time as the Marcomanni were settled in Pannonia in about 259–260. What is known is that Gallienus seems to have strengthened at least Siscia (mint attested there in 262), Aquincum and Sirmium. The existence of legionary *vexillationes* from Britannia Superior (*II Aug.* and *XX Val.*) and Inferior (*VI Vict.*), and from Lower (*I Min.* and *XXX Ulp.*) and Upper Germany (*VIII Aug.* and *XXII Prim.*) and their *auxilia* is attested for Sirmium for this period. The problem is that we do not know when these detachments were placed in these locations. It is therefore also possible that the mint and garrisons were established for example when Gallienus campaigned against Aureolus, and that the garrisons became permanent features because the area was under constant threat. Siscia was clearly meant to serve as a defensive base deeper in Roman territory meant for reserves (probably cavalry) while the latter two must have served both as defensive and offensive bases with their direct access to rivers.⁵¹

It is also known that Gallienus established *vexillationes* in the cities of Aquileia and Poetovio (*vexillationes* from the legions *V Mac.*, *X Gem.*, *XIII Gem.*, *XIV Gem.*, *I Adi.*, and *II Adi.*) both of which protected the approaches into Italy from the Balkans. Once again it is impossible to date the creation of these bases securely. It is possible that these

were established when Italy was threatened by Ingenuus, or Regalianus, or the Sarmatians, or the Alamanni, or the Macriani, or by Aureolus. Aquileia could also have been garrisoned to protect Italy against the Alamanni/Iuthungi/Marcomanni in about 259. Gallienus further strengthened the defences of Italy further in 265 by fortifying Verona at the head of the road passing through the Brenner Pass. It is clear that the purpose of this was to protect Italy against the Iuthungi/Alamanni, Marcomanni and Quadi.⁵²

Gallienus posted *vexillationes* from the Legions *III Aug.* and *II Parthica* at Lychnidus for the purpose of protecting the Via Egnatia running east from Dyrrachium.⁵³ The likeliest dates for the posting of troops at Lychnidus are the revolts of Regalianus, Macriani and Aureolus, but no certainty can be achieved.

The removal of some of the Marcomanni and/or Iuthungi from the border obviously created a power vacuum in the area vacated by them, but the advantage of their transferral inside Roman territory appears to have outweighed these concerns in Gallienus' thinking. Regardless, it is still possible that the removal of the tribe or tribes under Attalus created a power vacuum which made it easier for the Alamanni/Iuthungi to invade Italy. It is possible even to speculate that the invaders could have consisted mainly of the Marcomanni/Iuthungi tribesmen of Attalus brought inside the Empire by Gallienus. However, there is one very important thing that speaks against this conclusion, which is: it is next to impossible to think that the overly hostile sources would have failed to make the most of such a mistake by the hated Gallienus. In sum, it seems very improbable that the invaders would have consisted of the tribesmen of Attalus. My own educated guess, however, is that the power vacuum in the area previously held by Attalus' Marcomanni/Germans on the northern side of the Danube must have made it easier for the Iuthungi/Alamanni/Semnonese/Scythians to invade Italy in 259–260, even if the extant hostile sources fail to make most of this possible policy failure – and this at the same time as the Franks had already invaded Gaul. It is quite possible that these sources failed to connect cause and effect. The invasion of Italy by the Alamanni in 259 also suggests the possibility that Gallienus had crushed the revolt of Regalianus and transferred the Marcomanni to Pannonia already in 259, but once again this is not conclusive because the sources fail to see any connection between the invasion of Italy by the Alamanni and the transferral of the Marcomanni of Attalus to Pannonia.⁵⁴ Hence it is

impossible to know with any definite certainty when the revolt of Regalianus was crushed.

The information given by the *Augustan History* (Probus 6) suggests that Gallienus gave command of the Illyrian frontier to Probus after the death of Regalianus. The reason for this conclusion is that Gallienus' possibly-fictitious letter to the tribunes of Illyricum orders them to obey Probus at a time when Valerian had already been captured and the 'pretender' had been crushed. The only person who could be the pretender immediately after the capture of Valerian is Regalianus. The location, Illyricum, is also evidence enough for this.

This means that Gallienus apparently gave command of the armies posted in Illyricum to Probus in 259 or 260. The same piece of text also notes that Probus had not been in Illyricum when the usurpation took place and that it would have been unlikely that it would have taken place had he been there. It is therefore probable that Probus had been accompanying Gallienus because of the loyalty he had shown during the revolt of Ingenuus (see above) and it was thanks to this that he had gained Gallienus' trust – and, apparently with good reason as his name is not mentioned by any of the sources as being among the conspirators who murdered Gallienus. It is in fact likely that, before his Illyrian command, Probus served as commander of the *equites Mauri*, who belonged to Gallienus' units of bodyguards, because Zonaras (12.29) notes the personal friendship of Probus with Saturninus the Moor and Victorinus the Moor. It would have been natural for the men to befriend each other when they served in the same unit, but of course there is no definite proof of this – only my own educated guess based on probability.

It is also very probable that when Gallienus returned to Gaul to face the invaders there that he left Claudius in charge of some portion of the Danubian frontier, because it is clear that Claudius was not present when Gallienus received news of Claudius' behaviour from the *frumentarii*. On the basis of the apparent appointment of Probus to take care of the Illyrian frontier, my educated guess is that Claudius was given command of both Thrace and Dacia while Probus served as a commander in Illyricum, or that Claudius was given command of both Thrace/Dacia and Illyricum so that Probus served under him. According to the *HA* (Claudius 17 – Gallienus' possibly-spurious letter to Venustus), Gallienus had been informed by his *frumentarii* that Claudius, his 'kinsman' and friend, was angered by Gallienus' loose mode of life.⁵⁵ According to the letter, Gallienus called the rumours

false. In my opinion, it is likely that the rumour referred to the marital status of Pipa/Pipara. It was entirely acceptable for a Roman general and emperor to have concubines, even when the man was married to a Roman lady, but not barbarian wives. For example, one of the letters in the *HA* (*Claudius* 14, esp.14.7) even states that Claudius himself had been given two barbarian girls for pleasure from the captives. In other words, the loose mode of life must have referred to the rumours concerning the marital status of Pipa. As a result of the intelligence report, Gallienus then instructed Venustus to have Claudius appeased by Gratus and Herenianus, while the Dacian troops (presumably those who had previously revolted under Ingenuus and Regalianus) were still in a state of anger, in order that a serious revolt could be avoided. Gallienus also stated that he would send Claudius gifts. Venustus was instructed to see to it that Claudius accepted these gifts willingly. Venustus was also ordered to make certain that Claudius would not know that Gallienus had become aware of Claudius' anger so that Claudius would not resort to a revolt. The reference to the mutinous state of the Dacian troops and the types of money, gold *aurei* with the likeness of Valerian and Saloninus, suggest a date immediately after the revolt of Regalianus, but is of course not conclusive.

In sum, it is very likely that the letter describes the situation immediately after the revolt of Regalianus. It is unlikely to be a coincidence that Regalianus was by birth a Dacian and that the potentially mutinous troops consisted of the Dacian troops. The authenticity of this letter is of course open to suspicion because it is included in the *HA*, but one cannot deny the fact that its contents do seem to reflect accurately the situation in the immediate aftermath of the revolt of Regalianus. In light of this, it is probable that Gallienus dispatched Claudius there after the murder of Regalianus when Gallienus moved to Gaul, and that rumours of Gallienus' relationship with Pipa reached Claudius' ears as described in the letter.⁵⁶

Some of the extant sources claim that Dacia was lost under Gallienus even if it is still clear that the final withdrawal took place only under Aurelian. In my opinion, the above suggests strongly that the withdrawal was not made under Gallienus even if it is still quite clear that Dacia suffered serious damage under his rule. However, if we were to speculate that some sort of withdrawal did take place under Gallienus, then it is possible that he evacuated the most vulnerable portions. The timing of such a withdrawal is difficult because this could have taken place at any time during Gallienus' rule

as the Balkans was troubled throughout his reign.⁵⁷

It is also possible that Gallienus' reorganization of the defences in the Balkans included the raising of new legions and possibly also the relocation of some of the existing ones. The Late Roman *Notitia Dignitatum* includes a list of military units which shows that several of the old legions survived the turmoil of the third century, but it also proves that new legions were raised during the third. We know that at least Alexander Severus raised new legionaries and that *legio IV Parthica* was probably raised by him. It has been suggested that legions *I Illyricorum* and *IV Martia* were raised by Aurelian and then stationed at Phoenice and Arabia respectively, but in my opinion it is by no means certain that these legions were not raised by his predecessors.⁵⁸ This concerns in particular the *legio I Illyricum*. The reigns of Valerian and Gallienus would be very good candidates for the date of raising of this legion because new legions were certainly needed to fill up the holes created in the defences of Illyricum when large numbers of soldiers were killed to avenge their revolts.

The *Historia Augusta* (Claud. 14.2; Aur. 7.1, 11.4; Prob. 5.4.7) also names three legions, *III Felix* (posted in Thrace), *V Martia* (posted in Syria) and *VI Gallicana* (posted at Mainz, which was the HQ of *legio XXII Primigenia*) for the reign of Valerian (before 255) which are not attested in other sources – unless one of the existing legions III, V and VI had these names added to their title but this was not recorded previously. In my opinion, it is quite possible that these three unknown legions had indeed been created after 211 because new legions and other units were certainly raised after that date. In other words, I am quite prepared to accept that new legions were raised to bolster the defences in these two threatened areas. We do not know who was responsible for this, because both areas were subject to several invasions after 211, but the reigns of Gallienus and Valerian are possible candidates.

The *HA* (Prob. 6.5–6) also names *legio X* ('*decimanos, fortissimus exercitus*') as an elite force for the reigns of Claudius and Aurelian, the command of which was given to those who were destined to become emperors. The latter claim is impossible to verify unless it refers to the possibility that Aurelian, Probus, Diocletian and Maximian (see below) had all commanded this unit – a thing that is by no means impossible. In fact, it is possible that Claudius had also commanded it because it is very unlikely that he could have raised an entirely new elite legion during his very short reign. Indeed, if this *legio X* was not one of the

two older X legions, as seems more than likely, then it is probable that it had been raised by Gallienus and/or Valerian or one of their predecessors. Furthermore, on the basis of where this legion was posted, it is clear that it had been created for the defence of either Italy or the Balkans – both areas which certainly needed new units during the reign of Gallienus.

On the basis of Vegetius (1.17), it is also clear that two 6,000 strong legions, which were called *Martiobarbuli* because of the lead-weighted darts (known as *martiobarbuli/ mattiobarbuli/plumbata*) that they carried inserted in their shields (five each), were raised before the reigns of Diocletian(us) and Maximian(us). These two emperors made these legions their favoured bodyguard units by renaming them *Ioviani* and *Herculiani*.⁵⁹ It is very unfortunate that Vegetius fails to name the emperor who raised these two units and also fails to give their numbers. Consequently, it is possible that these two *Martiobarbuli* legions were either one of the above-named new legions of the HA or entirely separate from them.⁶⁰ Since *legio X* was considered an elite force, it would certainly fit the bill, but that would still leave out the numbering of the other *Martiobarbuli* legion. The likeliest date for the creation of the *Martiobarbuli* legions is therefore the reign of Gallienus, who is particularly well-known for his role in the raising of Illyrian forces, but naturally one cannot be certain about this. However, if this line of reasoning is correct, then it is possible that Gallienus was responsible for the creation of some of the most effective infantry forces in the Roman army.

On the basis of the unit names in the Late Roman *Notitia Dignitatum* and inscriptions, historians have also postulated the existence of other legions that were created between 211 and 284. These include legions *I-III Isaurae* which were probably created out of veterans under Probus, and *I Iulia Alexandria* and *I-III legiones Alpinae* (*Prima Alpina*, *Secunda Iulia Alpina*, *Tertia Iulia Alpina*). I agree with Parker (p.179) that we cannot date securely *I Iulia Alexandria* to the reign of Alexander Severus, and that *I-III legiones Alpinae* were probably not raised by Diocletian.⁶¹

In my opinion, one definite possibility is that all of these *Iulia* legions were raised during the reign of Caracalla in honour of his mother Julia Domna, or by Elagabalus to honour one of the Julia-named ladies of his family, or by Alexander Severus to honour Julia Mamaea, but as noted above none of this is certain. The likeliest answer for the inclusion of *Iulia Alpina* in the titles is actually that this

referred to the Julian Alps, but this does not explain the title *Iulia Alexandria*. In my opinion, the likeliest date for the posting of the three Alpine legions to block the Alpine passes to Italy would be the reign of Gallienus, who is definitely known to have posted forces in all of the strategic locales leading from Gaul, Raetia, Noricum and Illyricum into Italy. In the absence of any concrete evidence in the form of inscriptions etc. to the contrary, my tentative hypothesis is therefore that Gallienus did indeed post all of these (possibly already existing) legions to Italy and Illyricum so that the *I Alpina* and *III Alpina* were posted in Italy at Aquileia and Verona and *II Iulia Alpina* at Poetovio (see above). It is unlikely to be a coincidence that these legions were posted in these very areas at the time when the *Notitia Dignitatum* (Occ. 7) was written. It is therefore probable that these legions were created at the same time as the above-mentioned garrisons.

In sum, there exists plenty of circumstantial evidence for the creation of new legions under Gallienus to protect the threatened frontiers from Gaul to Thrace, so we should not see him only as a re-creator of the elite *equites* units.

5.11 Valerian's Wars in Asia Minor and East 256–260

In the meanwhile, as stated above, things had gone from bad to worse in the East. Zosimus (1.31ff.) specifies that when the neighbouring tribes (mostly Goths and Heruls) saw the spoils of war taken by the Borani in about 256/7, they followed the example and built a fleet with the assistance of their own prisoners of war and local merchants. The Goths and their allies decided to sail along the western side of the Black Sea, which was easier to sail and still lay unplundered. They also waited for the winter of 257/258, which allowed them to catch the Romans unprepared. Valerian had assembled his army at Antioch and dispatched his trusted general Felix to Byzantium. It is possible that it was at this time that Valerian also placed reinforced garrisons in both Byzantium and Chalcedon to block the straits, but clearly with insufficient naval assets to complete this. The Gothic infantry marched on land while the navy sailed along the coast. They passed by Istrus, Tomi and Anchialus that had already been plundered during the early 250s until they came to the Phileatine Lake, which was on the left of Byzantium, near the Pontus. There they caught local fishermen and their boats whose services they commandeered to ship their infantry across the strait from Byzantium to Chalcedon. The barbarians

bypassed Byzantium, because it was defended by the experienced general Felix as ordered by Valerian. According to Zosimus, Chalcedon possessed a garrison that was greatly superior in strength to the advancing enemy, but they did not possess any fighting spirit in them. The soldiers simply fled and left the city for the enemy to plunder. It is actually possible that the Romans avoided contact with the Goths because the enemy were carrying the plague. According to Zosimus, Valerian did not dare to commit the defence of Bithynia to any of his generals, because he distrusted them all. The probable reason for this healthy distrust is that Ingenuus had recently revolted and therefore it would have been very unwise to give any of the generals substantial forces.

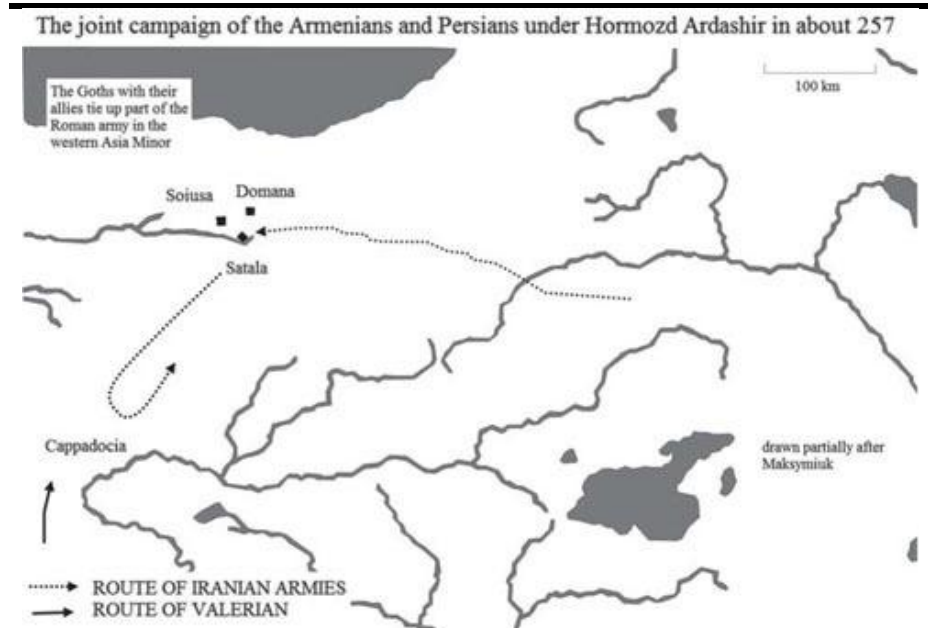
Instead, he himself marched from Antioch as far as Cappadocia, presumably to block the route of the Perso-Armenian invaders who had previously plundered Satala and other places in Little Armenia (see the accompanying map on p.85 with the SKZ, tr. in REF1), but then returned as he supposedly realized that he was only damaging his own territories. Does this mean that his army had already contracted the plague and was therefore only spreading it? On the other hand, if it were the Goths that carried the disease, and the Romans had previously tried to avoid catching it, then all their efforts had probably already proved useless. It is also possible that when Valerian reached Cappadocia he had already heard that Gallienus had crushed the revolt of Ingenuus and that the Perso-Armenians had also retreated.

What appears to be certain on the basis of Zosimus, however, is that whatever Valerian's defensive plan had been it had failed to stem the Goths. The Goths proceeded from Chalcedon against Nicomedia, but its inhabitants at least managed to flee in time. The Goths still got an immense amount of loot from the abandoned city, because the inhabitants could not carry everything away with them when they fled. From Nicomedia the Goths advanced to plunder Nicaea, Cios, Apameia and Prusa, but then they had to stop because the Ryndacus River had become impassable as a result of excessive rains. Consequently, the city of Cyzicus was spared of their unwanted attention. Cyzicus was the HQ of the Black Sea Fleet, the *Classis Pontica*, which means that its ships and marines were at this stage saved. After this the Goths retreated, burned Nicomedia and Nicaea, and then loaded their plunder in ships and carts and returned home to the Ukraine. It is possible that the news that the Persians and

Armenians had retreated and Valerian was therefore free to advance against the Goths contributed to their willingness to retreat. It is also possible that the probably-simultaneous approach of Gallienus from the west threatened to cut off their route of retreat. It should be noted that at the latest from this war onwards both Byzantium and Chalchedon seem to have served as defensive bases against further barbarian naval aggression, but with very mixed results thanks to the overwhelming numbers of the enemy.

The Map of the Campaign of Hormozd/Hormizd in 257:

After the assassination of Khosrov the Great in about 255/6 the Persians managed to turn the Armenians into their side. According to the HA (Valerians 3), the Armenians were led by Artavesdes. The first result of this was the joint invasion of Roman lands in about 257 at the same time as the Goths and their allies were ravaging Bithynia. Valerian had arrived at Antioch in 257 to block the Persians' advance in Syria from which he then advanced to Cappadocia to block the route of advance once he was certain that there was no immediate threat to Antioch. See the narrative with the collection of sources in Maksymiuk p.39 (note that my reconstruction is different).



After this uncalled for sideshow, Valerian was again able to concentrate his full attention on the Persian problem. However, since his preparations had been badly disrupted and his army had caught the plague, he was unable to achieve his military goals for the year 258. Regardless, he appears to have achieved some very limited local

defensive successes, the likeliest of which are the stopping of the enemy invasion of Syria with his arrival at Antioch and the stopping of the Perso-Armenian invasion at Cappadocia, as next year he minted coins bearing the legend *Victoria Parthica*. According to Shapur's inscription, the Persians invaded (presumably in the winter 259) and Valerian marched against them.⁶² Again according to Shapur, there was a great battle between Edessa and Carrhae in which he defeated a 70,000-strong Roman army, in the course of which he captured Valerian, a Praetorian prefect, senators and generals. According to Shapur, Valerian's army consisted of units drawn from the nations of Germania, Raetia, Noricum, Dacia, Pannonia, Moesia, Istria, Hispania, Mauritania, Thracia, Bithynia, Asia, Pamphylia, Isauria, Lycaonia, Galatia, Lycia, Cilicia, Cappadocia, Phrygia, Syria, Phoenicia, Judaea, Arabia, Mauritania, Germania, Lydia and Mesopotamia. However, other sources show that he was still somewhat liberal in his portrayal of facts. He did not capture Valerian and his entourage in the battle. In actual fact it appears that after the defeat, Valerian managed to retreat back to the safety of the walls of Edessa while part of the defeated army fled to Samosata.

According to the Roman version of events, Valerian assembled his army at Edessa but he despaired of winning because his army had caught the plague. The Moors, his elite light cavalry, in particular were badly affected. Consequently, Valerian first offered Shapur money in return for a peace, but Shapur did not consent. Shapur had learned of the plague and was therefore even more elevated when Valerian offered a peace. It proved to him that the Roman army was in a desperate state. He dismissed the Roman ambassadors and then followed in their footsteps. Shapur besieged Edessa, but he had misjudged its defenders. The garrison of Edessa fought doggedly and captured vast amount of booty in sorties against the besieging Persians. This encouraged Valerian to advance against the Persians, but now it was his turn to misjudge the situation. The Persians withdrew from Edessa and lured Valerian into a battleground of their own choosing. Valerian's army undoubtedly consisted of a mixed force of cavalry and infantry, because he could not overtake Shapur, whose army definitely included infantry for use in sieges. Valerian was utterly defeated by the Persians in a pitched battle. Zonaras claims that the numerically superior Persian army surrounded the Romans and killed most of them. This suggests that the figure of 70,000 men for the Roman army may have been inflated so that the figure of 20,000 given by Cedrenus or 40,000 given by Leo Grammaticus would

be closer to the truth, but obviously one cannot be certain – for example it is possible that the Romans lost 20,000 men. Whatever the truth, it is very easy to see why Valerian suffered such a terrible defeat. If the later figures for the Persian elite cavalry can be used as a clue, then the elite cavalry alone under Shapur would have consisted of about 20,000 horsemen, on top of which he would have had myriads of other forces including the Caduseni, Armenians and other allies!⁶³ It would have been child's play for them to surround and defeat the mixed Roman army because the numerically superior Persian cavalry could easily surround the infantry-dominated Romans in open terrain so that they could be subjected to a relentless harassment in the same manner as the Parthians had destroyed the Romans in the same terrain at Carrhae in 53 bc. In both cases the surprised, outnumbered and encircled Romans lost their morale quite fast, allowing the Persians to break up the Roman formation with the combination of shower-archery and lancer attacks. This proves that the morale of the Roman army was so low that it should not have been led against the Persians in the first place. The remnants of the Roman army fled to Edessa and Samosata.⁶⁴

The following 19th-century illustrations depict the two reliefs of Shapur I (240– 270/2) celebrating his victories over Philip the Arab and Valerian, and the restored statue of one the greatest military leaders of the third century, the king of kings Shapur I.



This relief shows Valerian held captive by the hand and Philip the Arab doing homage to Shapur I.



Left: According to Rawlinson, Valerian is doing homage to both Shapur I and Cyriades in this relief. If this interpretation is true, then Cyriades would have survived until the capture of Valerian. However, there is also another interpretation to this relief, which is that Shapur holds the hand of Valerian as captive, while Philip the Arab begs for peace and Gordian III lies as a corpse. For this see Shavarebi.



Above: A restored statue of Shapur I (a 19th century drawing, face is inaccurate).

As a result of Valerian's folly, the Roman garrison of Edessa was

naturally in a highly-seditious state. Valerian had just led them to a very serious defeat and the fugitives from Valerian's army brought back with them the plague, on top of which they also consumed food belonging to the Edessan garrison and their families. In other words, now the garrison and their families faced the double disaster of the plague and famine. It was only a matter of time before they would turn against their emperor. In desperation, Valerian again seems to have decided to buy peace from Shapur, but the latter refused to deal with intermediaries. Shapur demanded a personal meeting. Valerian foolishly agreed and was seized by Shapur together with his small personal retinue. Subsequently, according to the Continuator of Dio/Peter the Patrician f174, Shapur sent one Cledonius to ask Valerian's fiscal officer Macrianus (*praepositus annonae* and *comes largitionum*), who was in Samosata, to come to Valerian but he wisely refused to negotiate. Valerian ended his days as a slave of Shapur. His duties included the act of being a mounting block for Shapur whenever he wanted to mount his horse. After his death, Valerian was flayed and the skin dyed red then put on display so that it could serve as a reminder of Roman shame to all visitors and to Roman ambassadors in particular.⁶⁵

Now Shapur was in a position to exploit his success. He left part of his army to besiege Edessa and then advanced against Samosata, which fell easily because Macrianus retreated to Emesa.⁶⁶ The Persians altogether took 36 cities, but Shapur made the serious mistake of allowing his army to become dispersed in the process. As a result, the Persians, who were additionally hampered by their huge amount of booty and slaves, were nowhere strong enough to resist the regrouped Romans. And the Romans had already reformed in four different groups: 1) under Callistus, who bore the nickname Ballista; 2) under the abovementioned Macrianus; 3) under unknown commanders mentioned only by Armenian sources;⁶⁷ and 4) under Odaenathus, the Arab king of Palmyra and Roman senator.

The Iggereth Rav Sherira Gaon claims that Odaenathus sacked Neherdae near the city of Ctesiphon in 259, which, if true, could mean that Odaenathus was conducting deep raids behind enemy lines while Shapur was busy besieging Roman cities, but it has also been suggested that the date is incorrect so that the sacking of the city would have taken place only in about 262–263.⁶⁸ My suggestion is that the pillage of Neherdae took place during the pursuit of Shapur by Odaenathus in about 261. It is impossible to be certain about this,

but what appears certain on the basis of the *HA* , Zosimus and Zonaras is that Odaenathus began the reconquest of lost Roman territory almost immediately after Shapur had advanced westwards away from Mesopotamia. Most importantly, Zosimus notes that Odaenathus acted from the very start as Gallienus' general and also commanded Roman legions. According to these sources, he probably retook Nisibis, Carrhae and Mesopotamia almost immediately, then defeated Shapur himself and pursued Shapur and Shapur's children as far as Ctesiphon, capturing Shapur's concubines and a great amount of booty. However, on the basis of the *HA* (*Gall* .10.1ff.) it is possible that the re-conquest of Carrhae and Nisibis took place later in 264. If this is true then, Odaenathus would actually have conducted three campaigns against the Persians: the first in 259–261, in the course of which he pursued Shapur up to Ctesiphon and from where he then returned to fight the Macriani; the second in 264, when he re-conquered Nisibis and Carrhae; and the third in 266–267 against Ctesiphon, after which he turned back to face the Goths. Whatever the truth, Odaenathus appears to have received Gallienus' order to return to crush Macrianus when Odaenathus was fighting in the neighbourhood of Ctesiphon in 261.

The other reason for his readiness to retreat back to Roman territory was of course the fact that the Persian satraps were harassing his forces that were besieging Ctesiphon. Consequently, he was quite ready to obey. There also exists a dedication which praises Septimius Herodianus (likely to be Odaenathus's eldest son Herodes) for his victory over the Persians near the Orontes River. This dedication has been used as evidence that Herodes inflicted a serious defeat on the Persians and forced them to retreat from Antioch. One may make the educated guess that this defeat together with the successes of Odaenathus forced Shapur to start his retreat that then led to the battle in which Shapur was defeated and forced to flee to Ctesiphon.⁶⁹

Map of Shapur I Campaigns in the West 259-261:

Shapur I renewed his campaign against Valerian in 259 and defeated him at the battle of Edessa/Carrhae after which he captured the foolish emperor during negotiations probably in 259 rather than in 260 (i.e. accept the opinion of those who place the capture to the year 259). He followed up his success by advancing against the remnants of the forces under Macrianus Major (the later usurper and father of the two emperor/usurpers) at Samosata. The Romans withdrew from

there to Emesa and thereby left Asia Minor open for invasion. It was at about this same time that Shapur I also launched a campaign against Armenia to annex it permanently (my view). The Romans dispatched help to the Armenians, but the Persians defeated them. Shapur advanced to Cilicia where he divided his army. One portion continued to ravage the coastal regions while the other portion under Shapur himself appears to have marched north to engage the other Roman relief army if we are to believe the Armenian sources while Ballista surprised one of the Persian columns near Pompeiopolis. In the meanwhile, Odaenathus had also joined the Romans and had ousted the Persians from some of the cities. It was as a result of this that Shapur apparently left the pursuit of the Roman relief army under his satrap and started the withdrawal of his forces from Roman territory. See the narrative with Maksymiuk, 40ff. and REF1 and Festus 23.2. Note that my reconstruction differs from all the rest because I also use the Armenian sources to shed light on these events. I also date the events a year earlier than is usual.

Shapur's campaigns in the west in 259-261



Of the Romans only Ballista was successful because he used the fleet to move his forces in sudden naval raids against the dispersed enemy, but he was helped by the fact that the unknown Roman commanders appear to have forced Shapur to march into Cilicia against a Roman relief army which he duly defeated.⁷⁰ When this took place, Ballista disembarked his men near Pompeiopolis and inflicted a defeat on the Persians who were apparently besieging the city. The

Persians suffered 3,000 killed, on top of which Ballista managed to capture some of the concubines belonging to Shapur's harem. Zonaras notes in particular that the Persian corpses and captives included women warriors – were these female bodyguards like there were in India? It is possible that Gallienus had some role in this because it is clear that by the time of the amphibious operation Ballista was operating officially as Gallienus' commander. It would not have taken more than two weeks for the couriers to reach Gaul and then another two weeks to return.⁷¹ In short, there was plenty of time for Gallienus to confirm the appointment of Ballista and to send instructions and possibly even reinforcements such as naval detachments. In addition, the besieging of the cities did not always go smoothly. Zonaras (12.25) praises in particular the bravery of the population of Caesarea (said to have possessed 400,000 inhabitants) and its commander Demosthenes. Demosthenes was able to fight his way through to freedom when the city fell.

As noted above, Shapur decided to retreat, but the garrison of Edessa blocked the route. Shapur purchased a safe passage by handing over all the booty except prisoners, but his troubles were far from over. The sheik of Palmyra, Odaenathus, defeated him and pursued the fugitives up to Ctesiphon, which he appears to have reached in 261 before his return to crush Macrianus. Odaenathus had previously attempted to negotiate with Shapur, but Shapur had foolishly treated him haughtily. Shapur paid dearly for his haughty behaviour towards this desert prince.⁷²

The following illustration from the 18th century may depict Gallienus advancing to the East, but this is uncertain. It is clear that Gallienus celebrated the victories of Odaenathus as his own (presumably for the first time in 262 during the Decennial and then in a triumph in 264, see later), but it is not known with certainty how his contemporaries felt about these. What is certain is that (if the emperor is Gallienus) the illustration portrays Gallienus in the heroic mold as a nude warrior among the gods. Gallienus rewarded Odaenathus with the titles *dux romanorum*, *corrector totius orientis*, and *imperator*. This was a wise policy, necessary to keep the Arab sheik and Roman senator happy – it was much less costly than having to fight him. The titles were a cheap means of keeping the man happy in a situation in which he was already in possession of the areas in question.



Below left: Odaenatus according to Duruy
(attribution uncertain)

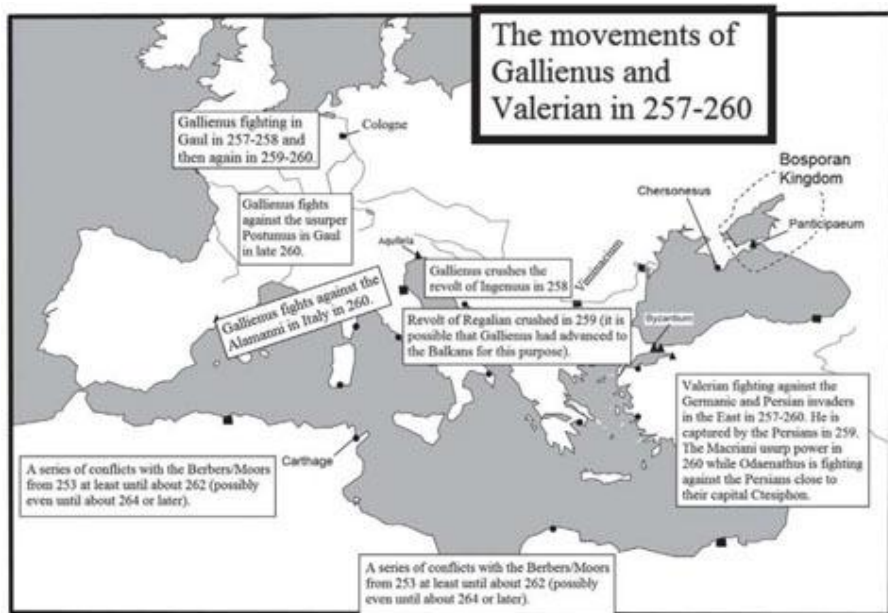
Below right: Zenobia, 2nd wife of Odaenathus according
to Duruy (attribution uncertain)



5.12 The Invasion of the Franks, Alamanni and Sarmatians in 259

In the meanwhile, as already noted, Gallienus had not been able to rest on his hard-won laurels. The transferral of the army from the Rhine region and Raetia frontier to fight against Ingenuus had seriously weakened those defences with the result that in about 258–259 the Franks broke through the lower-Rhine in a raid that may have reached Tarragona/Tarraco in Spain – if this event took place during this campaign. Some of them even commandeered ships with which they raided the coasts of Africa. They appear to have established a base in North Africa from which they raided the Mediterranean coasts for a decade or so as pirates. Zosimus (1.37) also mentions that the Scythians had united and invaded Italy (the Alamanni and Iuthungi in

other sources) and Illyricum (the Sarmatians in other sources), while Gallienus was beyond the Alps fighting against the Germans, presumably in 259–260. The Franks appear to have invaded first so that Gallienus marched to Gaul first and took reinforcements en route with the result that the Alamanni were able to penetrate through the weakened defences into Italy.



Coins of Gallienus minted in the east (source: Beger 1696).

Chapter Six

The Sole Reign of Gallienus: The Years of Multiple Crises 259–264

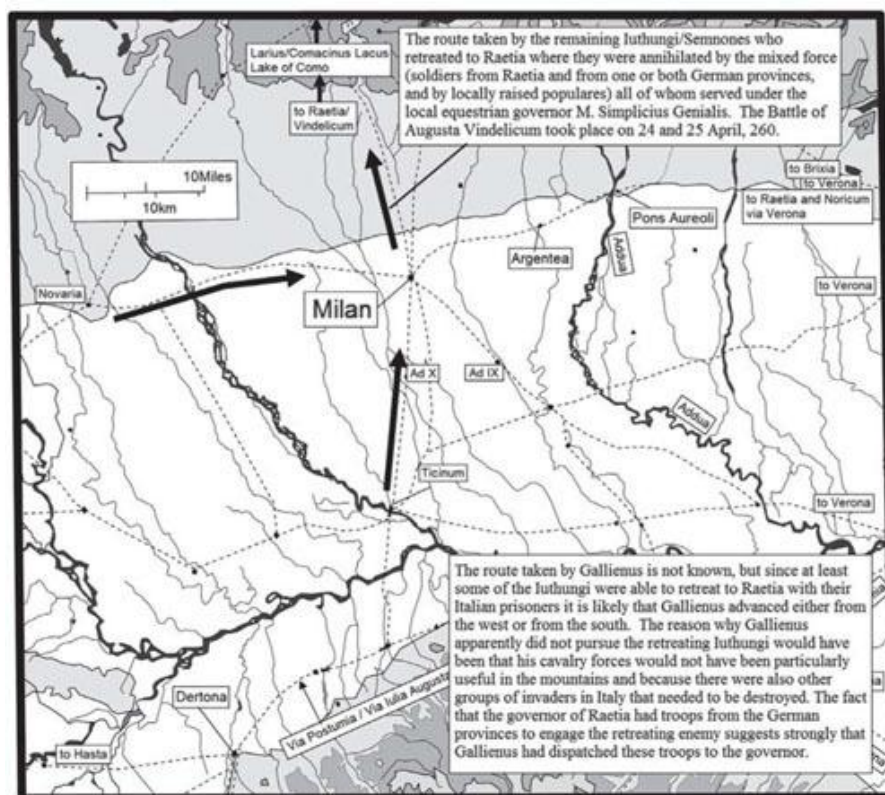
Gallienus' sole reign had not started auspiciously after his father had been captured by the Persians in 259. The barbarians were invading along all of the frontiers and this was followed up by a string of revolts. The generals left in charge of the armies were hostile towards Gallienus, who was seen as an ingrate because he did not help his father. The rumours regarding the marital status of Pipa were not helpful when they reached the ears of conservative traditionalist officers. There is also no doubt that there was something in Gallienus' personality and habits that caused resentment among these very same traditionalistic and conservative generals.

6.1 The Invasion of the Alamanni and Iuthungi in 259–260 and the Battle of Milan in 260

As noted above, my reconstruction of the sequence of events for the year 259 is as follows: Gallienus crushed Regalianus before mid-summer 259 after the capture of Valerian by the Persians; he returned to Gaul from the Balkans before September 259 and engaged the Franks; the Alamanni invaded Gaul and Italy while Gallienus was fighting against the Franks. Consequently, it was probably in autumn 259 that the Alamanni ("All Men") and the Iuthungi ("Young Ones", later part of the Alamanni) invaded through Raetia across the Alps into Italy.

Regardless of the complications caused by the defective sources, there is at least one thing of which we can be certain. As a result of the crushing defeats suffered by the previous emperors and the casualties caused by continuous warfare, the professional Roman army simply did not possess the necessary numbers to protect the Empire against all of the simultaneous threats it was now facing. Italy lay undefended in 259. The fact that the sources mention the Alamanni invading so many different locales from Gaul to Italy suggests that the invaders were probably separate large groupings of war bands and tribes, but then on finding Italy defenceless, they are likely to have split up their invading armies even further to be able to loot and pillage as far and wide as humanly possible.¹

Consequently, at least one of the bands of invading Alamanni was able to advance at its leisure against the eternal city. In this emergency, the panicked Roman Senate armed the soldiers in the capital (the veterans with the remaining Praetorians and other Rome-based units, possibly including *Parthica II*, and soldiers on leave together with the *Vigiles* and *Urbaniciani*) plus the strongest citizens. There was still plenty of martial spirit left in the Romans. According to Zosimus (1.37), the army thus collected possessed superior numbers, which terrified the outnumbered barbarians so that they withdrew. Despite the positive outcome, it is not surprising that Gallienus was not altogether pleased. The Senate had shown an initiative that could spell serious trouble later if allowed to go unpunished. They had also bypassed the Urban Prefect and the other commanders left in charge of the remaining Praetorians and other troops.



However, despite the successful defence of Rome, Italy still suffered dearly. The Alamanni and Iuthungi ravaged Italy mercilessly as they withdrew. The Alamanni also appear to have brought with them the plague (Zos. 1.37). An unprecedented plague is said to have struck the cities with the result that those cities that had already suffered badly

at the hands of the barbarians became completely depopulated. According to Zonaras (12.24), however, Gallienus had now arrived on the scene, presumably in the winter or early spring of 260. Zonaras claims that Gallienus defeated 300,000 Alamanni near Milan with an army that had no more than 10,000 men (undoubtedly cavalry). It is clear that Gallienus' army consisted of cavalry, because the terrain around Milan was relatively open so that he would have needed a fast moving mobile force in order to be able to manoeuvre fast enough in this terrain against numerically superior enemy forces. Had he used infantry, the Alamanni and Iuthungi, who were famous for their cavalry, would have surrounded and annihilated his numerically inferior force.

It is unfortunate that we do not know which of the two cavalry battle array variants Gallienus used, because the combat doctrine for 10,000 horsemen allowed flexibility. Therefore, it is possible that the support line had either two divisions or four.



Gallienus, aureus, minted at Rome after 259
 GALLIENVS AVG, Gallienus radiate head
 APOLLINI CONS AVG, Centaur walking, drawing a bow
 Officina letter z

This centaur with the bow may be a metaphor for the Roman mounted archers belonging to Gallienus' *equites*. In other words, it is possible that the coin celebrates the successes of Gallienus' mounted archers at some unknown battle at some unknown point in time possibly even at Milan (Drawing slightly simplified)

The figure given by Zonaras of 300,000 men for the Alamanni has been considered a gross exaggeration, but I still find it consistent with the other figures given by the sources when these describe the migrations of tribal confederations and I therefore consider it entirely plausible.² However, it is still clear that Gallienus did not engage this entire force at the same time, but rather the Alamannic portion of this force (the Iuthungi were able to retreat to Raetia, see below), which was in all probability divided into several encampments around the city of Milan so that Gallienus was able attack each of these in succession, possibly in the same manner as is described in the sixth

century *Strategikon* in the context of a cavalry attack against a string of Slavic settlements.³

Regardless of the apparent huge numerical difference, it is indeed entirely plausible that Gallienus could have defeated the enemy decisively with a mere 10,000 horsemen if he managed to create a domino effect so that he engaged several enemy camps separately, each consisting of perhaps 20,000–30,000 men, around the city of Milan. In other words, the initial surprise attack against the enemy camp, or two to three camps, or the defeat of the enemy cavalry in one camp followed up by the storming of their encampment, would have caused the fugitives to flee in panic towards the second group/camp at the same time as the Roman cavalry was already advancing towards this. The sight of the simultaneous Roman attack and the fleeing fugitives would then have infected the next camp with panic, which in turn would have created a domino effect and the wholesale rout of several separate divisions that had marched in close proximity to each other. The resulting chaos would have allowed the Romans to butcher panicked soldiers and women and children in droves. It would have been very easy for a trained soldier to kill and wound 10–20 women and children in a couple of minutes, and not much more difficult to kill fleeing panicked unarmed warriors from behind. However, Gallienus was unable to exploit this victory fully because he apparently had only 10,000 with him. Furthermore, he needed to settle matters with the too-independent Senate and it was soon Postumus' turn to try his luck by donning the purple. Consequently, at least the Iuthungi survived and tried to withdraw through Raetia.

In the meantime, the governor of Raetia M. Simplicinius Genialis had not been idle.⁴ He had collected an army consisting of the troops of Raetia and Germanic provinces, and of the *populares* (civilian conscripts or militia). With this force he inflicted a severe defeat on the 'Semnones now known as Iuthungi' at Augsburg (Augusta Vindelicum) on 24 and 25 April, probably in 260, and liberated thousands of captured Italians. He achieved this victory while still loyal to Gallienus. By the autumn Genialis had joined Postumus, who had usurped power in the summer. The dating of the defeat of the Iuthungi in Raetia proves that Gallienus had engaged the Alamanni near Milan, at the latest in early April 260.

It seems probable that Gallienus ended the war with the defeated Alamanni and Iuthungi by making an alliance with them, as he was in the habit of doing, and if he did not make this sort of an agreement

initially then it is very likely that the revolt of Postumus would have forced his hand. Consequently, I think that John F. Drinkwater (2007, 75) is likely to be correct when he makes this conjecture on the basis of the fragments of the *Skythika* of Dexippus (Dindorf, *Historici Graeci Minores* 190ff.; Müller, *FHG* 682ff.) that Gallienus made an agreement with the defeated Iuthungi in 260 according to which the Iuthungi received payments in return for providing soldiers whenever required. It is more than likely that Gallienus resorted to the same policy with the Alamanni. It is in fact possible that Gallienus even settled the defeated Alamanni in Agri Decumates to act as buffers either before the revolt of Postumus in the summer of 260 or after Gallienus had defeated Postumus in about 261. However, it is also possible that these were actually given land in Agri Decumates by Postumus, or that Postumus managed to bribe those already settled there by Gallienus to change sides when he concluded a series of alliances with the Germans, or that the Alamanni simply exploited the troop withdrawals when Postumus advanced against Gallienus in 260 (see later). It is very unfortunate that we do not know the exact circumstances surrounding the final loss of Agri Decumates to the Alamanni at about this time. The fact that the Iuthungi appear to have pillaged only Raetia up to Italia Transpadana in 270, after the Romans had apparently ended the payments in that year, may also suggest that Gallienus had settled at least some of the defeated Iuthungi in Raetia, but this is similarly uncertain.

Probably in summer

AD

260, Macrianus, together with Ballista, decided to proclaim the two sons of Macrianus, Titus Junius Fulvius Macrianus and Titus Fulvius Quietus, as emperors, due to the fact that the elder Macrianus was lame and Ballista too old to don the purple.⁵ This means that it took place roughly at the same time as Postumus usurped power (on which see below).

6.2 Gallienus' Reforms and the Suppression of the Senate in 260

In the summer of 260 Gallienus faced five major problems which were: 1) the capture of his father; 2) the continuing invasion of Gaul and Spain by the Franks, which was being dealt with by Postumus in his absence; 3) the revolt of the Macriani in the East; 4) the invasion of Italy by the Iuthungi and Alamanni; and 5) the independence shown by the Roman Senate. In about July-August 260 Gallienus

received the worst news of all. Postumus had usurped power in Gaul and had killed Gallienus' son Saloninus (see below).

When Gallienus learnt of the capture of his father, he seems to have been simultaneously elated that he could now act on his own while at the same time he must have felt real sorrow because of his father's fate.⁶ His immediate reaction seems to have been to maintain the façade of business as usual as he did every time that he received bad news, whether it was a rebellion in Gaul, or in Egypt, or even the assassination of his sons. Even though it appears probable that Gallienus was not a stoic, he still took the bad news as if he were.⁷ Regardless, it seemed to outsiders that he acted indifferently to the plight of his father, but in reality there was little else that he could do. It is quite obvious that as emperor he could not really negotiate with an enemy who held his father hostage. It would have been a sign of weakness that his enemies could have exploited. Furthermore, it was probably unwise to associate himself too closely with his father the loser. Consequently, Gallienus, who was temperamentally the polar opposite of his father, immediately and seemingly gleefully, began to change the failed policies of his ultraconservative father. What is practically certain is that the refusal to negotiate with the enemy came from Gallienus himself because there would certainly have been enough time to act in another way had he wanted to do so. This seeming filial indifference angered some of the traditionalists and conservatives and the friends of his father.

When there were revolts arising in every corner, the independent defence of Italy by the Senate also seems to have aroused the suspicions of Gallienus. He undoubtedly could still remember well the time when the Senate had appointed its own emperors against Maximinus Thrax, the role of his father during those years, Decius' rise to power, and the role of the Senate in his and his father's own accession to power. In addition, as Lukas de Blois notes (pp.35–36), the usurpers undoubtedly had friends and supporters among the Senate that were now a clear threat. Gallienus' reaction was not slow in coming. Straightaway, he cowed the Senate into obedience with his henchmen and collaborators and abolished the offices of the *legati legionis* and of the *tribuni laticlavii* that had traditionally been the prerogative of the senators (Aur. Vict. 33), but it is not known with certainty whether he also excluded the senators from the position of *dux*.

The decision to exclude the senators from these two military

positions has caused plenty of speculation among modern historians, and some even claim that the whole edict is a fabrication or misunderstanding of Aurelius Victor. However, I agree with de Blois that there must be something behind Victor's claim, because it is after this that the two posts disappear from the record. Gallienus' goal was to make certain that rich senators, with the means to raise revolts, would thereafter lack contact with the military and its officers and that they would also lack the personal military experience which could be used together with their money to foment revolts and usurpations.

From the point of view of military efficiency, the decision was also a sound one. Now, it was possible for the truly gifted commoners and members of the equestrian order, in other words for the military careerists, to rise to the very highest military positions at a time when they were most sorely needed and when the ever-smaller numbers of active members of the born senators were themselves more inclined to follow the civilian career path.⁸ In my opinion, it is likely that Gallienus took these precautionary steps against the ambitious members of the Senate at some point in time during the spring or summer of 260, at the latest after he had learnt of the revolt of Postumus and/or the Macriani.

Gallienus also replaced the governors of provinces, mostly senators who did not retain his trust, with men mainly of equestrian status who had had long military careers. However, he did not pursue this policy mindlessly. After all, he also had his own friends and supporters in the Senate. If the office holder was considered loyal he kept his position. However, it is still possible that at least sometimes the actual *de facto* command of the armies was even then taken away from the senatorial governor and given to the local equestrian *dux*, but this is uncertain because there appears to exist irrefutable evidence which proves that the governors always retained full command of the soldiers in their provinces, even when these units were commanded by equestrian prefects or *duces*. Furthermore, it appears likely that Gallienus appointed military men of equestrian order (most of whom were from the Balkans and who had served as *protectores*) into the posts of *agentes vices praesides* (independent vicars with the legal privileges of *virī egregii praesides* or *virī perfectissimi praesides*) to replace the *praeses* (governors) of the senatorial class only in such areas that had suffered serious damage or were otherwise threatened by enemies (Arabia, Cilicia, the two Pannonias, Hispania Baetica, Sardinia – which had

suffered from piracy, etc.). This appears to have been an emergency measure, the purpose of which was solely to unite military, financial, juridicial and administrative functions all under a single experienced military man so that he could perform his task more effectively. The nature of the threat made it necessary that the persons put in charge were all military careerists so that they could organize their provinces in such a manner that the military could be used in the most effective way for the defence of the province.⁹

On top of this, under Gallienus the separate career patterns of the equestrians and senators appear to have become completely meaningless, as both could now obtain positions that had traditionally been the exclusive right of one or the other social order, so that the senators could even become praetorian prefects while the equestrians could obtain consulships and other privileges previously held only by the senators. Gallienus also continued the older practice of appointing a single governor or a single *dux* to take charge of a longer section of the frontier so that these could have under them several governors, prefects and *duces*. What is certain, however, is that the removal of the senators from the command of the legions and the diminishing number of governors' posts available to the senators made Gallienus the most hated emperor of all times among those senators who were active and ambitious, and this had consequences later.¹⁰

The tolerance of Christianity was undoubtedly another bone of contention between Gallienus and conservative senators because it is clear that most of the active and ambitious members of the Senate were intensely hostile towards Christianity. It is otherwise quite difficult to explain why the conservative Decius and Valerian, both of whom followed strictly pro-senatorial policies, would have been so hostile towards the Christians.

This means that the highest echelons of military command came to consist of the *duces* (mostly *duces limitis/ripae*), various *comites* (counts) appointed as needed, the most important of whom appears to have been the *Comes* (or *comites*) *Domesticorum* first attested in 283/4, and of the *magistri* (if the former did not command the cavalry and infantry *Comitatus*). Previous research has not noted the appearance of the new military office of *comes*, but a closer analysis of the sources makes this very likely.¹¹

Gallienus also oppressed the senators in other ways. According to Ammianus Marcellinus (21.16.9–11), Gallienus was exceptionally ruthless and cruel towards suspected figures of opposition. He used

informers and inhuman torture even against imagined plotters (meaning undoubtedly the upper echelons of society who were supposed to be immune from the use of torture in interrogation), while still trying to appear just and merciful even though at the same time he still left many proven conspirators unpunished. This means that Gallienus' internal security apparatus relied heavily on the loyalty and abilities of his *protectores*, *peregrini* and *frumentarii*.¹² As a result, conservative traditionalists both in the army and in the Senate simultaneously feared and hated Gallienus. This policy of oppression worked relatively well after 262, until the assassination of Gallienus in 268. All suspects were assassinated by Gallienus' secret service before they could act, or their plans were exposed in a timely fashion. The senators were clearly cowed into obedience. It is no wonder that Gallienus got such bad press from the Latin historians! They reviled all those who oppressed the senators.

One of the first actions of Gallienus as sole emperor seems have been to stop the persecution of Christians initiated by his father at the instigation of the abovementioned finance minister/magician Macrianus. The ending of the persecution of the Christians was a very wise policy at a time when the Persians were ravaging the east. It removed the possibility of them exploiting such grievances.¹³ However, in the eyes of Macrianus such a change of policy must have looked threatening. He must have felt that his own life was now in very grave danger! Gallienus had even abandoned his own father! Could Macrianus expect anything good from such a man? Consequently, he decided to revolt against Gallienus (on which, see later). On the other hand, if Gallienus ended the persecution only after the revolt of Macrianus, then we must see in this an attempt to divide loyalties in Macrianus' army. For example, the famed Oshroenian corps of mounted archers was partly Christian.¹⁴ In fact, Gallienus' change of policy undoubtedly encouraged the Christians to join his army. Orosius (7.22) claims that all those who had favoured the cruel persecution of Christians under Valerian, including agents, informers, accusers, spectators and judges, were all scattered through the provinces and that God's avenging blow smote them all. This may mean that Gallienus purged the imperial machinery of the staunchest supporters of his father's policies, which would have been a necessity, but it is also possible that Orosius' statement should be seen as Christian wishful-thinking – it is impossible to know for certain.

The economic and cultural trends so much in evidence after the

year 235 continued under Gallienus and in all probability reached a zenith during his reign. The insecurity resulting from foreign invasions and constant civil wars, together with the plagues (especially after 250) and natural disasters, all caused a drop in agricultural output and trade, with ensuing famine, depopulation, a collapse of social order (i.e. brigandage and piracy; decurions unwilling to serve; soldiers looting and pillaging), the spread of mystery cults and superstitions, and finally the impoverishment of cities. The imperial authorities and soldiers attempted to solve the resulting fiscal insolvency by resorting to an ever-more-efficient collection of *annona* and other taxes in kind, while debasing the silver coinage in order to obtain more money to pay the troops, which thereby contributed to the process of economic downturn. The freeholders protected themselves either by placing themselves and their property under the protection of great landowners as *coloni*, or by fleeing to the wilds to practice brigandage. The wealthy individuals possessed so much influence that it was difficult for the authorities to gather taxes or conscripts from their estates. Consequently, the authorities taxed those who could least afford it ever more stringently. These tendencies became even worse under Gallienus' sole rule.¹⁵

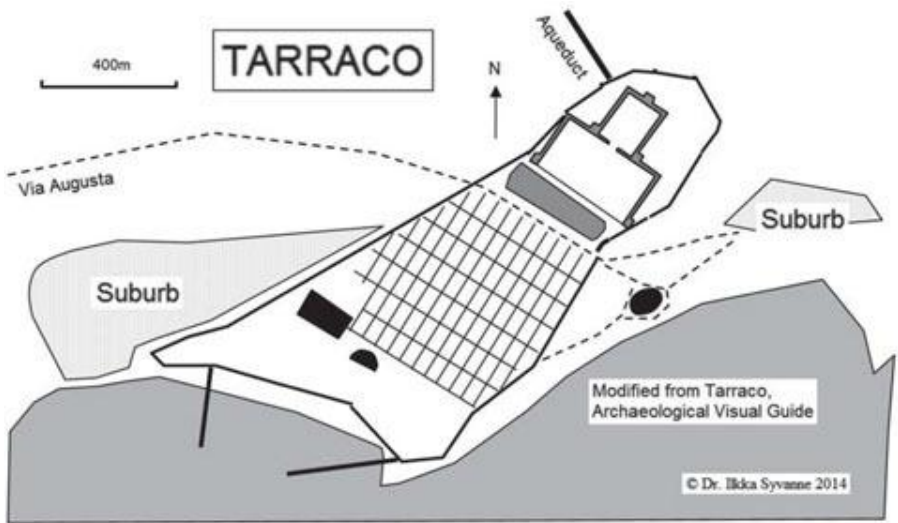
Just like his father and several emperors before him, Gallienus resorted to three emergency measures to remedy this. Firstly, he debased his silver coinage to the lowest level ever with the result that it was practically worthless as a means of exchange with foreign traders or as payments to the Federates, who henceforth demanded to be paid in gold. Secondly, he confiscated the property of the rich even on the flimsiest of excuses and gave these as gifts to his officers and troops (see Claudius' reign for an instance of this). Thirdly, just like many other emperors of the third century, Gallienus turned some of the confiscated properties into imperial domains that could be taxed regularly. This caused widespread dissatisfaction among the senators and other rich persons, but enabled Gallienus to finance his army and administration in the emergency, because the income derived from the property of a single senatorial family could finance the whole imperial army and administration for one year easily.¹⁶

6.3 The Revolt of Postumus in 260 and Gallienus' Response

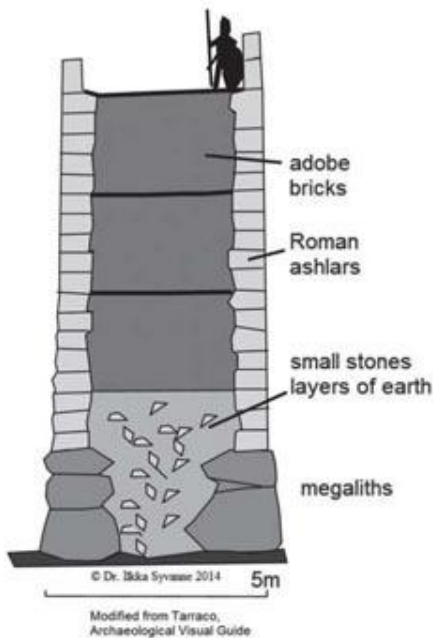
In 260, when Gallienus had hastened to fight the 'Alamanni, Iuthungi, Semnones and Scythians' in Italy, the defence of Gaul had again been left in the hands of Postumus (probably as *dux ripae/limitis*). However,

Gallienus had learned from the previous mistake of placing his son under the tutelage of one powerful officer and had therefore placed his son under Silvanus (probably Praetorian Prefect), but in the end even this precaution failed to save his son's life.¹⁷

The Franks spread terror throughout Gaul. One group attempted to conquer Tours while some of them marched to Spain where they destroyed Tarragona/ Tarraco. The boldest of them even attacked Africa. On top of this, at least a portion of the Franks appear to have formed a robber state in Spain which lasted for well over a decade. The Alamanni attacked the Upper German and Raetian limes, sacked at least Avanches, and eventually conquered the Agri Decumates. The Roman defences were overwhelmed and the commanders had to resort to the use of guerrilla warfare against the invaders. Postumus followed the standard military operating procedure when one was unable to face the invaders in pitched battle in the initial stages of the conflict, which was to engage the retreating enemy when they were already leaving Roman territory, exhausted and burdened with booty.¹⁸



Wall of Tarraco



The map above and the structure of the wall on the left are based on Tarraco, Archaeological Visual Guide (these are also included in my MHLR).

It is unfortunate that we do not know any details of how the Franks were able to take and pillage this sizable city because the Franks were not known for their siege skills. My own educated guess is that the Spanish cities lacked adequate numbers of trained soldiers and militiamen to defend the walls. It is also possible that the Franks exploited their maritime skills and surprised the defenders by attacking from the sea. All of this, however, is mere speculation.

Consequently, probably in very early 260, Postumus defeated one of the returning divisions of the invading Franks somewhere in the Rhine area and then divided the spoils amongst his soldiers. This did not sit well with Silvanus, who was governing in the name of the young Saloninus at Cologne. Silvanus ordered the property to be sent to him, either to fill up Gallienus' war coffers or because he wanted to restore the property back to its rightful owners. Postumus made a show of obedience and summoned his soldiers. He then told his receptive audience that he had been ordered to confiscate their

rightful spoils of war from them, with the natural result that he was hailed as emperor. It is likely that he had already heard of the capture of Valerian, of the barbarian marriage of Gallienus, and of the measures taken against the Senate if these took place before Postumus' usurpation. It is very probable that Postumus had decided from the start to endear himself to the soldiers by giving them the spoils of war. Postumus was a traditionalist in the mould of Valerian, and pro-Senate.

He forthwith advanced against Cologne without giving his enemy time to react. In the course of the siege, the mint of Cologne tried to rally support by proclaiming Saloninus Augustus, but in vain. After a brief siege probably lasting only weeks, in late-spring or summer 260 either the citizens or the local garrison opened the gates and handed over Saloninus and Silvanus for Postumus to kill.

Gallienus' reaction was not long in coming. When the news of Gallienus' approach was brought to Postumus, he seems to have collected at least some auxiliaries ('Celts and Franks')¹⁹ and may have evacuated the northern portion of Raetia (Agri Decumates), after which he advanced against Gallienus. This left the border without adequate defence, with the result that Agri Decumates was possibly lost to the Alamanni if they now exploited the opportunity. As noted earlier, the other possibility is that the Alamanni were actually given this territory in return for military service.²⁰

The sources for Gallienus' campaign or campaigns against Postumus are so poor that modern historians have not been able to find a common ground in deciding when Gallienus attacked Postumus and whether he conducted one or two or even three campaigns against him. My own educated guess, which is based on the slight differences in the details of the campaign in the *HA* (Gall. 4.4, 4.6–7 and 21.5; TR 3; TR 11), is that there were at least three or even four separate campaigns led by Gallienus in person (260–261, 261–262, 263? and 266–267), but meaning that there was actually one continuous war running from 260 until 268. The *HA* (Gall. 4, esp. 4.5) gives us actually a good clue that this war between the two men lasted for seven years by stating that Postumus held his power that long. My educated guess is that it was probably during the first of these campaigns that Gallienus was wounded by an arrow so that he was forced to send Aureolus against the Macriani, and that this campaign was renewed after Gallienus had concluded a peace with Aureolus. The wounding is the best explanation for the fact that Gallienus gave

command of the campaign against the Macriani to Aureolus.

Zonaras (12.24) gives us the most detailed discussion of one of the campaigns of Gallienus against Postumus, which I take to mean the first campaign. According to Zonaras, Gallienus was defeated in the first encounter, but then forced Postumus to flee. Next Gallienus ordered Aureolus to pursue Postumus, but Aureolus deliberately allowed his quarry to escape. On the surface, this would seem to describe a typical cavalry encounter in which the first attack with the first line failed, but then the renewed attack with the cavalry reserves succeeded, but this is not necessarily so. The information provided by other sources suggest the possibility that there were actually several battles even if one cannot rule out that Zonaras' text refers only to a single cavalry battle in which the reserves under Gallienus decided the day, following which Gallienus would have given the task of pursuit to Aureolus. This would also imply that Postumus would have used cavalry in front of his infantry, which would not be impossible in light of the fact that Gallienus appears to have formed his famed *equites* in Gaul and it is also quite likely that Postumus would have found the raising of cavalry forces similarly useful in this very same area to counter the multiple threats. However, as said, it is likelier that there were two separate battles, the first of which ended in Gallienus' defeat.

The fragment of the Continuator of Dio/Peter the Patrician (f.182) does suggest that there was not a single battle, but is not conclusive. According to this fragment, Gallienus first demanded that Postumus give his army a free passage to Gaul so that they could see who was stronger. Postumus naturally refused. Then Gallienus sent further messengers to challenge Postumus to single combat to prevent further shedding of Roman blood. Postumus answered that he was not a gladiator and did not intend to become one. This shows that Gallienus had indeed lost the first battle. He had undoubtedly tried to force his way through the Alpine passes with his mobile cavalry, but with the foreseeable result. As a result of this defeat, he then issued the abovementioned challenge to Postumus to revive the fighting spirit of his defeated army. The first defeat also appears to have caused the defection of Britain and Spain to Postumus' side.

At about this time, early in 261, Postumus minted 'Good Fortune/Galley' types on all denominations of the coinage. This may suggest that Gallienus had initially and apparently very unwisely tried to land an army in southern Gaul during the winter of 260–261, with the

result that it had been destroyed in a winter storm. A lost naval battle is less likely because Gallienus would have had naval superiority thanks to the fact that he possessed the praetorian fleets (Misenum and Ravenna), but one cannot entirely rule out the possibility that Postumus could have indeed defeated Gallienus' navy in a naval battle because Gallienus had been forced to dispatch at least part of it with Theodotus to Egypt (see below).²¹ However, Zonaras' text shows that after collecting additional forces, most likely infantry, Gallienus was successful in forcing his way to Gaul.

At about this time in 260–261, Gallienus or his forces also reconquered Raetia that had declared for Postumus in late summer of 260, but we do not know the fate of Agri Decumates with certainty (see above). It is in fact quite possible that Gallienus' main army, led in person by the emperor, advanced through Raetia to Gaul and that it was because of this that he regained control of the area when the enemy was forced to retreat.

The referral to a personal challenge by Gallienus is important because it shows that he was confident that he would defeat Postumus in a duel. It also shows that Postumus shared this view. On the basis of this, it is probable that Gallienus was known to be a superb duellist just like Caracalla had been. He could have achieved his fame by fighting single combats against gladiators, but it is even likelier that he had gained a reputation as a superb fighter in the cavalry battles and skirmishes. Note also the claim of Trebellius Pollio that Gallienus showed audacity and valour when stirred by affronts during his war against Postumus (*HA Gall.* 7.2). It is therefore very likely that he occasionally charged at the head of his cavalry unit/wedge to encourage his men forwards, and he may even have fought duels. It is unlikely to be a coincidence that Claudius was also claimed to have fought like Achilles! This does suggest the likelihood that in this period soldiers expected their commanders to lead from the front like Caracalla had and that some commanders like Gallienus and Claudius achieved great personal fame as a result.

Consequently, we do not know for certain how Gallienus achieved his victory over Postumus, but it is likely that after his initial failure he used infantry to force his way through the Alps or rather that he marched through Raetia. What is certain is that he defeated Postumus in pitched battle somewhere in Gaul and that the intended pursuit with cavalry followed immediately after. It is actually no wonder that the cavalry under Aureolus would not have pursued the retreating

enemy army effectively in either case. The likely previous defeat suffered by the cavalry would still have been fresh in the memory of the horsemen. That alone would have sufficed to make the cavalry hesitant in pursuit, but it was thanks to this that Aureolus was suspected of disloyalty. Whatever the truth, Gallienus was still ready to accept Aureolus' excuses and forgive him his supposed disloyalty or negligence. Another possible reason for the slowness of the pursuit is that, if Gallienus had previously lost his fleet in a storm, the supply situation could have forced the cavalry to slow down their advance when the fleet had not brought the supplies upstream in time.

Regardless of the reason, the ineffective pursuit proved very costly because it gave Postumus the chance to regroup his forces and find a place of refuge inside some city. Furthermore, it was probably because of the abovementioned suspicion of disloyalty that Aureolus started to fear for his life with the result that he began to plan a revolt. However, the time was not yet ripe. Aureolus knew that in order to be able to usurp power he first had to win the support of the troops with military successes that were clearly lacking during this campaign.

Consequently, it was thanks to the lacklustre pursuit that Gallienus was forced to besiege Postumus and the remnants of his forces in an unknown city (*HA Gall.*, 4.1–5). In the course of this siege Gallienus appears to have taken unnecessary personal risks, because he was badly wounded by an arrow. The wound, however, was probably not the reason for the abandonment of the siege, but rather the news that the Macriani had landed in the Balkans and were therefore threatening Italy. However it is likely that the wound was the reason why Gallienus put Aureolus in charge of the operations against the Macriani. Gallienus' wound was apparently so bad that he was unable to accompany the fast-moving cavalry army on the march and in battle. Aureolus clearly still had the trust of Gallienus. It is unclear how many of the elite *equites* of Gallienus would have now followed Aureolus and how many would have been left behind to protect the emperor and Italy. It was probably now that Gallienus posted at least some of his famed *equites* permanently at Milan to protect the north of Italy, simultaneously against Postumus and against the Alamanni. It is also probable that at this stage they were commanded by Claudius, because Aureolus and Domitianus had been dispatched to the Balkans to face the Macriani.

When Gallienus withdrew from Gaul in the spring of 261, Postumus was in no position to pursue him. His own regular army had been

shattered by Gallienus. Modern historians have also suggested that it is likely that the Franks invaded Gaul again in late 261, in 262, and in 263, but in my opinion it is probable that the main reason for Postumus' problems was the fact that Gallienus returned to Gaul immediately after he had concluded peace with Aureolus in 261. Regardless, it is still clear that modern research is correct to state that the invaders of Gaul included the Franks, because it is probable that at least some of these tribes had stayed loyal to their previous agreements with Gallienus, and when Postumus withdrew forces opposite them to fight Gallienus, the Franks simply exploited the opportunity. Consequently, it was only in late 263 that Postumus was finally able to return to his capital Trier (see below).²²

6.4The War against the Macriani 260/261–262

23

The reasons why the Macriani and Ballista rose in revolt are shrouded in mystery. One possible reason could be that Gallienus refused to negotiate with the Persians and a second is the tolerance of Christians shown by Gallienus, but at the same time it is likely that at least one of the reasons was racist. It is probable that Ballista and some of the Roman soldiers (i.e. the officers of Valerian posted in the East) resented the fact that the Arab sheik Odaenathus had been given command of the campaign against the Persians together with Roman legions. Peter the Patrician (f.185) gives us a good example of this. According to him, Cyrinus (probably Aurelius Quirinus, an official from Egypt), detested the fact that a foreigner had taken command of the war with the result that Odaenathus ordered Cyrinus executed. It is quite possible that this incident took place at this time and was one of the reasons for the revolt.

The disgruntled Romans, led by Ballista, asked the *a rationibus* Fulvius Macrianus to become emperor. He refused on the grounds of age and infirmity. Therefore the 'soldiers' nominated Macrianus' sons Fulvius Macrianus and T. Fulvius Iunius Quietus as emperors. Ballista was nominated as *Magister Equitum*. The usurpers and Ballista decided to exploit the absence of Odaenathus in the east and the absence of Gallienus from the Balkans by invading the Balkans with an army of 30,000 soldiers in 260 or 261. Father and son Macriani took charge of the campaign while Quietus and Ballista remained behind to secure the east against Odaenathus. When the news was brought to Gallienus, his orders to Odaenathus were naturally to turn back and suppress the

As noted, the invading army was led by Macrianus the elder and his son, while Ballista together with Quietus remained behind to rule the east. Elsewhere, the *Historia Augusta* (Gall. 2.6 vs. Macr. 12.12) claims that the Macriani had 45,000 men. This probably implies that the Macriani had added 15,000 Pannonian soldiers to their original 30,000-strong force. There is no doubt that they hated Gallienus.

According to the *HA*, the Macriani first sent a certain Piso against Valens, proconsul of Achaëa, who had also revolted against Gallienus. But then, Piso in turn proclaimed himself emperor, and withdrew into Thessaly, where he was then supposedly killed by the assassins sent by Valens. This series of events does not strike true to me because there is a glaring discrepancy in the *HA*. According to the *HA*, the Senate, with the approval of Gallienus, voted divine honours to Piso after he had been assassinated by Valens' henchmen. This actually makes it quite likely that Piso had in fact revolted against the Macriani and sided with Gallienus at the time of his murder.

Valens' success proved only temporary, because he was slain by his own soldiers. This suggests that Gallienus' *frumentarii* had killed Valens at the first opportunity. However, if both Piso and Valens were indeed usurpers, as claimed by the *HA*, then there also exists the possibility that both were assassinated by Gallienus' *frumentarii*, but as stated it is likely that Piso had actually deserted to Gallienus' side.²⁵

It is possible that it was then in 260 or 261 (or later) that Gallienus protected the approaches to Italy by posting garrisons in Aquileia, Poetovio and Lychnidus, but it is also possible that these had already received garrisons in 258–259 to protect Italy against Ingenuus or Regalianus. The garrisons at Poetovio and Lychnidus would also have kept the two possible invasion routes (the road from Aquileia to Poetovio and the Via Egnatia in Greece) to the Balkans open for Gallienus' army (for the other possible dates, see the narrative).

Aureolus, his second-in-command Domitianus, and the other generals under him probably reached the Balkans in the spring of 261 and engaged the Macriani somewhere in the region – the sources do not agree where. The *HA* claims that Aureolus had usurped power prior to the encounter, but this seems improbable (see below). The battle was fought either in Illyricum, Thrace or Pannonia. The likeliest of these is Illyricum, because the Macriani would definitely have had enough time to march towards their goal Rome to meet the advancing army of Gallienus. The sources do not tell us the strength of Aureolus'

army, but the Macriani had either 30,000 or 45,000 men. It appears more likely that the Macriani had only 30,000 men, because they had previously despatched Piso against Valens and even after the death of both Piso and Valens, they would still have needed to garrison the most important locales along their route of retreat and to post a separate force to block the advance of the armies still loyal to Gallienus. This would also explain why the army of Aureolus was able to surround the enemy. If the Macriani had only 30,000 men of whom most would have been infantry, it is quite obvious why Aureolus' army of approximately 30,000–35,000 horsemen (if the cavalry army had a similar strength to that shown in the diagram of the Italian Formation in the *Strategikon*) could surround them. Even if Aureolus had only about 20,000 cavalry, because the emperor had retained some for his own safety, it would have still been sufficient to surround an infantry-based army. The *hypostrategos* Domitianus would have led the first line and Aureolus would have led the reserves. The sources do not specify what type of force Aureolus had, but the description of the different stages of the following battle make it practically certain that his force consisted of cavalry.²⁶

According to Zonaras (12.24), Aureolus encircled the rebel army, and then killed some of the Roman troops but not all, because Aureolus did not press his advantage. Zonaras claims that the reason was that the opposing side contained men of the same race as some of Aureolus' so that Aureolus hoped that they would desert to his side.

Initially his hope was in vain because the enemy refused to surrender. This suggests the likelihood that the infantry of the Macriani had adopted the hollow square/oblong array when Aureolus' forces had surrounded them.

Zonaras claims that the surrender of the enemy resulted from a lucky break. When the soldiers marched (i.e. retreated), one of the standard bearers of the usurper stumbled, fell and dropped his standard either accidentally or on purpose. The other standard bearers followed his example and the soldiers declared for Gallienus. In my opinion this suggests the likelihood that the army of the usurpers included western detachments that had previously been taken to the east by Valerian. These men would not have been overly enthusiastic to fight against their comrades in arms, and if they had families in the west even less so. The morale of these forces, who had previously fought against the Persian cavalry with very poor success, cannot have been too high either, and now they faced another elite cavalry force

encircling them like the Persians had done slightly over a year ago. According to the *HA*, Aureolus bribed some of the enemy to change sides and one may make the educated guess that this happened right now. Only the Pannonians remained loyal to the Macriani, but their situation was hopeless. Consequently, Macrianus asked the Pannonians to kill him and his son, which they did and then they surrendered to Aureolus, who spared their lives.

There exist three pieces of circumstantial evidence that indicate most clearly that Aureolus used cavalry to engage the usurpers. Firstly, Aureolus' army surrounded the enemy force, which means that he certainly had more horsemen than the enemy. Secondly, the enemy force clearly consisted mostly of footmen because Aureolus was unable to defeat them after his forces had killed some of them. Thirdly, the description makes it clear that the footmen of the Macriani were able to continue their march/ retreat even after Aureolus' forces had killed some of them and had surrounded their forces. If Aureolus had a large infantry-based army, the enemy force could not have retreated/advanced in formation in the manner described. However, if Aureolus had a cavalry-based army, it was quite easy for an infantry-based army to march in formation through the surrounding cavalry force because it was very difficult for cavalry to break up an orderly infantry formation thanks to the fact that most horses were (and are) unwilling to charge into 'solid' objects. It was because of this that infantry forces of all ages have used the double phalanx or hollow square/oblong arrays when they faced cavalry. This does not preclude the possibility that Aureolus also had infantry with him, but if he did, these had clearly been left behind in the marching camp.

There were still the usurpers in the east, Ballista and Quietus, to be dealt with. Gallienus gave this task to Odaenathus, who either already held one, two or all of the titles *dux romanorum*, *corrector totius orientis* and *imperator*, or he now received one, two or all of these titles to make his position official before the campaign, or he received one of those (e.g. *imperator*) afterwards as a reward. My own guess is that he was already a *dux* and that he was now made a *corrector* and that the title *imperator* was given later. Odaenathus, who had just returned from Persia, defeated Ballista and Quietus in battle and then besieged them at Emesa in summer or autumn 261/262.

There exist five versions of what happened next. According to the first, Odaenathus killed Quietus while Ballista usurped power so that

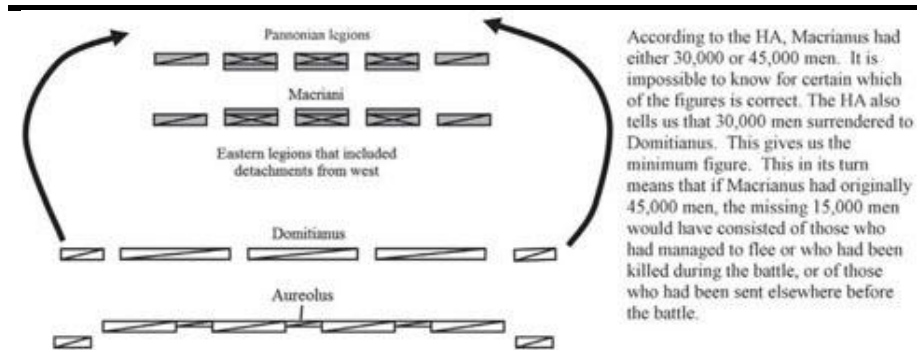
he would not be killed. The second version states that Ballista killed Quietus and handed over the city to Odaenathus in return for a pardon. According to the third, Ballista was pardoned, but then usurped power. The fourth version is that Ballista was executed on his estates near Daphne after being pardoned. The fifth version is that Odaenathus killed Ballista in battle while the people of the city of Emesa killed Quietus. Regardless of which version one believes, it appears quite certain that Ballista was also killed because usurpation would have sealed his fate anyway.²⁷

Aureolus' ca. 30,000 cavalry vs. Macriani's 30,000 infantry and cavalry in 261

AD

The hypothetical diagram of the battle shows the probable deployment of the armies and why Aureolus was able to surround the army of the Macriani. The numbers involved are a guess based on the known numbers of the Macriani. Considering the fact that the Macriani knew that Aureolus had a cavalry army, it is likely that they deployed their army either as a double phalanx or a square formation, the former being more likely because it fits better what actually happened. The mixed infantry and cavalry army occupied less space than the pure cavalry army, because when the infantry was deployed in a testudo order against arrows while marching, each soldier in the formation would have occupied only about 45-60 cm in width while in the corresponding cavalry close order each horseman occupied a minimum of 90 cm in width. Even if the footmen would have retained their normal close order array with each man occupying 80-90 cm in width during marching so that they could assume the kneeling testudo against the cavalry, it would still have been easy for the faster moving cavalry with numerical superiority to encircle them at will. Consequently, when the armies came face-to-face, the cavalry army easily outflanked the Macriani and killed some of them before the infantry was able to assume the hollow oblong array. For additional details, see the analysis of the period infantry tactics in the introduction with my monograph on Caracalla. In the end most of the soldiers of the usurpers deserted. The standard bearers simply lowered their standards and hailed Gallienus. However, the Pannonian units were prepared to fight to the death, but did not do so because Macrianus asked them to kill him and his son. Consequently, Aureolus achieved a relatively bloodless victory, because he faced enemies who had become used to being defeated by cavalry armies: those who had

been posted in the east had been mauled by the Persians, and those who had sided with Ingenuus had been crushed by Roman cavalry led by Aureolus.



Gallienus undoubtedly received the news with joy. He celebrated these successes with a coin-issue and organized a triumph at Rome, probably in 264, at the same time as he assumed the title of *Persicus Maximus* (HA Gall. 12). Odaenathus had sent the captured satraps and other booty to him, which were put on display during the Triumph (HA Gall. 10.4–5).

6.5 The Revolts, Invasions, Pestilences and Natural Disasters in 261–262

However, Gallienus could not rest on his laurels. The prefect of Egypt Aemilianus also donned the purple, probably in the summer of 261, and most importantly Aureolus revolted. According to the HA (Gall. 5.6), Gallienus faced simultaneously the revolts of Postumus in Gaul, Aureolus in Illyricum, and Aemilianus in Egypt, while the Goths captured Thrace, pillaged Macedonia and put Thessalonica under siege. These events seem to have taken place roughly in 261–262.

According to the HA (TR 22), Aemilianus revolted solely because he was desperate to save his own skin. It claims that a soldier serving under *dux* Aemilianus killed a servant of a curator sent by the emperor with the result that the mob (who were apparently supporting the legitimate emperor) attacked his house. It was thanks to this that he feared for his life because it appeared as if he had been opposing Gallienus' curator and was behind the killing of the slave. The HA also claims that the soldiers, who were hostile towards Gallienus, were urging him to don the purple. It is quite probable that Aemilianus and the garrison forces had not sided openly with Gallienus in a situation in which the Macriani had declared themselves as rulers and it was because of this that the situation was so volatile for them. However,

the rioting of the pro-Gallienus mob in Alexandria was not the only problem that Aemilianus faced. He was also forced to deal with the nomadic Blemmyes, who were threatening his borders. Consequently, he usurped power, quelled the riots and advanced against the Blemmyes. He had to prove himself as a general to prove his right to rule.

If there is any truth in the stories of Aureolus revolting twice (*HA Gall.*, 3.1ff., 4.6ff.; TR., 11) and there appears to be because Zosimus (1.38.1) confirms this, the first of these must have happened in 261 because, according to the *HA* (TR. 11), Aureolus revolted at the instigation of his troops when he was commanding the Illyrian armies.²⁸ The circumstances of Aureolus' revolt are obscure. The *HA* claims that he revolted before engaging the Macriani, but this is false because the deserting soldiers of the Macriani hailed Gallienus as emperor and not Aureolus. It is also clear that Dionysios in Egypt was not even aware of it in about 262. The reason for this conclusion is the inclusion of Dionysios' letter to Hermannon and the Christian community of Egypt in Eusebius' *Church History* 7.22–23 (tr. by Williamson and Louth, p.238):

‘Macrian, after goading one of his emperors and attacking the other, suddenly disappeared root and branch with his whole family, and Gallienus was proclaimed and recognized by all. He was both an old emperor and a new: he both preceded and followed them. ... In the same way Macrian, after pushing himself forward and insinuating himself into the imperial prerogatives of Gallienus, is no more (he never was!), while Gallienus is just as he was before, and as if it had cast off its old age and purged away its former dross, the monarchy flourishes now as never before, is seen and heard over a wider sweep, and spreads in all directions. ... It occurs to me to take another look at the length of the various reigns. I observe that the wicked emperors who once were famous have been quickly forgotten, while the one who became more religious and devoted to God has passed the seven-year mark and is now completing a ninth year, in which we may indeed keep festival.’

The above implies that Aureolus's revolt cannot have been long. The claim that after the death of the Macriani all recognized Gallienus as their emperor suggests that the revolt of Aureolus took place only after he had defeated the Macriani rather than before it. It was not only typical for usurpations to occur after some military success, such as the defeat of the Macriani, but in this case it is also likely on the

basis of what Dionysios states. Even if one still cannot entirely rule out the possibility that events unfolded as stated by the *HA* (TR 11.1–3), and that the revolt of Aureolus did indeed take place before the battle, this still seems very unlikely for the reasons given above. The dating in the text allows us to pinpoint the date of the crushing of the Macriani to the year 261 (253 + 8). It also proves that Dionysios had not heard of the revolt at the time he wrote the letter. It is no wonder that modern historians have doubted the veracity of the first revolt of Aureolus, but Zosimus and the circumstantial evidence do lend support to the claim of the *HA*. It is also quite notable that the Christian Dionysios had a considerably better image of Gallienus than we can read from the sources based on pagan traditions.

As if the revolt of Aureolus would not have sufficed, the Roman Empire faced other troubles in 261/262. The Goths had invaded the Balkans and Asia Minor; a violent earthquake hit Asia, Rome and Libya, followed by a violent tsunami so that many cities were flooded in 262; a pestilence struck both Italy and Greece; and the slaves revolted in Sicily. The scale of the simultaneous disasters must have made the task of defeating all of the enemies seem quite daunting. Gallienus was not only facing many enemies simultaneously, but he also had to find money to pay for these efforts. As noted above, the solution was to debase the coinage even further, to pay his troops in kind and to confiscate the property of the rich. The banditry resulting from the slave revolt was crushed by local forces, but Egypt, Asia and the Balkans required Gallienus' personal attention. He sent Theodotus with a fleet to retake Egypt, which was the grain basket of Rome, while he himself marched with reinforcements to the Balkans. He could ill afford to alienate the populace of Rome with bread shortages at a time when there were troubles everywhere.

Fortunately for Gallienus, Egypt was a country divided. Part of the city of Alexandria had remained loyal to Gallienus. The Christians were definitely among his supporters. On top of this, and also in Egypt, Aemilianus had other troubles. He was forced to fight the Blemmyes, who were harassing the Thebaid. He defeated them and was preparing to exploit his advantage by preparing an expedition, probably for the purpose of marching against Ethiopia, at the time Theodotus reached Egypt. Consequently, it was relatively easy for Theodotus to land his forces at Alexandria for the purpose of retaking Egypt. He defeated Aemilianus in a pitched battle and captured him, and then sent him alive to Gallienus, who had him strangled in prison.

The captured soldiers were disciplined cruelly and the ringleaders put to death.²⁹

6.6 War with Aureolus in 261

Gallienus himself took on the task of crushing Aureolus and pacifying the Balkans in 261. His army undoubtedly included most of his famous *equites*, infantry detachments, engineers, artillery, navy and other supporting units. Gallienus advanced against Aureolus, who seems to have assembled his army in Pannonia, with the result that the border to the east of the opposing armies was opened up to the Goths to invade. The Goths ravaged Thrace and besieged Philippopolis, pillaged Macedonia, laid siege to Thessalonica, and advanced to Achaëa (see below).

It is possible that it was then that Gallienus garrisoned the town of Lychnidus in Macedonia with *vexillationes* from the Legions *II Parthica* and *III Augustae* to protect the Via Egnatia (Saxer, 55–6) as it was a potential invasion route for Gallienus' army into Greece and from thence to Byzantium. Similarly, it is possible that Gallienus posted the garrisons in Aquileia and Poetovio to protect Italy against Aureolus and to facilitate his own invasion of Pannonia, but nothing is known for certain.³⁰ For other possible dates regarding the establishment of these bases, see the narrative.

We do not know any of the details of Gallienus' campaign against Aureolus except that after he had in vain tried to defeat the man, he concluded a peace with him because he wanted to continue his war against Postumus. This does suggest the likelihood that Aureolus was able to avoid contact with Gallienus' forces by conducting a skilful war of maneuver. In light of Gallienus' readiness to give an amnesty to Aureolus and his soldiers, it is possible that the whole usurpation had been the result of the fear that arose from the accusations levelled at Aureolus during the pursuit of Postumus and when the reasons for the misunderstanding had been removed Aureolus was ready to surrender.³¹

6.7 Gothic invasion of 261–262: Marcianus vs. the Goths in the Balkans

The peace with Aureolus enabled Gallienus to continue his war against Postumus and to send Marcianus against the invading Goths (*HA Gall.* 6.1). Marcianus decisively defeated the Goths in Achaëa in 261–262(?). The dating of this defeat of the Goths is uncertain

because it is possible that it referred to the fighting either in 267 or 268. Marcianus is also recorded as having saved the city of Philippopolis in Thrace.³² The successes of Marcianus seem to have forced the Goths to hasten to their ships and to start ravaging Asia Minor, where they burned the Temple of the Moon at Ephesus.³³ The problem appears to have been made worse by the refusal of the soldiers and fleet posted at Byzantium to cooperate with Marcianus. It is probable that these forces consisted mostly of those who had supported the Macriani and Ballista (see below).

6.8 The Campaign Continues against Postumus in 261–262

In 261, after he had concluded peace with Aureolus, Gallienus seems to have campaigned in Gaul against the usurper Postumus. I base my conclusion on the version given by the *HA* (*Gall.* 21.5), which implies that Gallienus fought at least two separate wars against Postumus, one before his Decennial immediately after the usurpation of Postumus that ended in the arrow wound (*HA Gall.* 4.1–6), and another after the Decennial (Sept. 262)³⁴ and victory over the Goths (presumably achieved by Marcianus in the Balkans), ‘peace’ with Odaenathus and his reconciliation with Aureolus. The problem with this is that the *HA* gives two different times for the second war against Postumus, because the author claims that Gallienus celebrated his Decennial only after his second war against Postumus and the killing of Byzantines had been completed (*HA Gall.* 7.1–4) or that he fought the campaign after the Decennial (*Gall.* 21.5). The third alternative is that Gallienus fought them immediately before the Decennial in 261–262 and then immediately after the Decennial in 263 so that his campaign in 266–267 would have been his fourth major campaign against Postumus. As regards the second campaign, the date before the Decennial actually fits better the description of events elsewhere in the *HA* (namely the timing of the massacre at Byzantium and rapid peace with Aureolus) and I have here accepted this version of events. According to the *HA*, Gallienus’s generals in this campaign were Aureolus and the *dux* Claudius. The commanders on the opposing side were presumably Postumus, and the future emperors of Gaul, Victorinus, Lollianus/Laelianus and Marius.³⁵

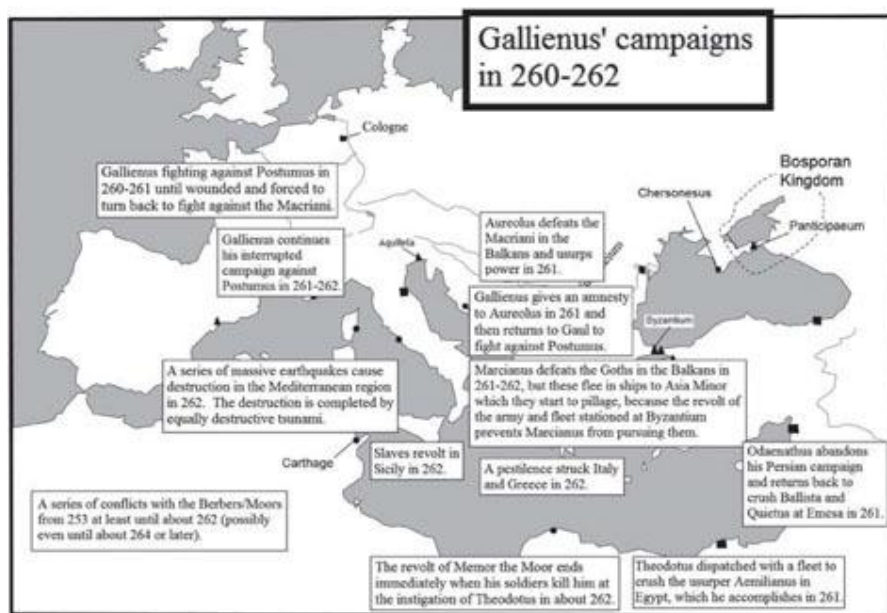
The *HA* (*Gall.* 7, TR 6) claims that when fighting against Gallienus, Postumus appointed Victorinus as his *co-princeps*, because he felt unable to deal with the situation alone. The same author also claims that Postumus and Victorinus summoned to their aid a huge force of

German (Celts and Franks) auxiliaries/mercenaries. The reference to the position of Victorinus as *princeps* quite probably suggests that there was actually a third/fourth major campaign in 266–267 because Postumus and Victorinus shared the consulship in 266 or 267, or that the second campaign took place much later in 266/267 than implied by the conclusion of the peace with Aureolus or that the war campaign lasted from 260 until 268 in such a manner that most of the operations were undertaken by Gallienus' generals. As noted above, my own educated guess is that the war between Gallienus lasted continuously from 260 until 268 and that Gallienus conducted three or four major campaigns in person against Postumus, the last of which took place in 266–267.³⁶

It is impossible to be absolutely certain, but it was apparently during the second war (which probably took place in 261–262) that 'Trebellius Pollio' claimed that Gallienus showed audacity and valour when stirred by affronts (*HA Gall.* 7.2). To me this suggests that Gallienus fought heroically at the forefront of his army mainly thanks to the fact that he was a loving father who fought against those who had killed his son. Whatever the timing, it is still clear that the raising of massive numbers of German auxiliaries or the help of Victorinus (if it had already taken place in 262) did not ensure Postumus a victory, because according to the *HA* (*Gall.* 4.6, 7.1–2, 21.5; *TR* 6) after the war had dragged on for a long time and several battles and sieges had been fought with varying outcomes, Gallienus' forces were victorious, after which Gallienus finally advanced against the Roman garrison of the city of Byzantium. The *HA* does not explain why Gallienus marched against Byzantium, but the reason must have been that its garrison had refused to acknowledge Gallienus as emperor and had also therefore refused to obey his commander Marcianus. On the basis of this, the likeliest date for the second major campaign against Postumus is from late 261 until the spring 262.

Unfortunately, the sources do not specify why Gallienus failed to exploit his advantage against Postumus, because the fateful wounding from the arrowshot seems to have taken place in 260–261 rather than during the second campaign, but it is possible that the *HA* has just mixed up the events of several campaigns so that we do not know when the wounding took place. If we interpret the evidence in this way, it would mean that the first campaign against Postumus in 260–261 was halted only because Gallienus had not been able to defeat Postumus decisively before the landing of the forces of the Macriani in

the Balkans forced Gallienus to retreat to Italy and then to divide his forces so that he remained in Milan to protect Italy while Aureolus advanced against the usurpers. The revolt of Aemilianus in Egypt in 261 (see above) could also have been the reason why Gallienus chose to remain in Italy. He would have needed to make certain that the resulting dearth of provisions would not have caused a revolt in Rome. This would also mean that the pursuit of the defeated Postumus and the wounding of Gallienus during a siege took place actually either in 262 or in 263 or in 266/7. However, I have here adopted the solution that it was during the first campaign in 260–261 that Gallienus was wounded so that he had to leave the campaign against the Macriani to Aureolus³⁷ and that the likeliest reasons for the abandonment of the campaign during the second invasion in 261–262 were the apparent refusals of the soldiers and fleet in Byzantium to obey *dux* Marcianus and the ongoing invasion of Asia by the Goths/Scythians, which then required Gallienus' swift response in a situation in which the war in Gaul dragged on because Postumus had conducted his campaign with such skill that Gallienus had not been able to force him to fight a decisive battle.



It is unfortunate that we do not know who Gallienus appointed as commander of the war against Postumus when Gallienus left the western theatre of war in about 262.

6.9 Wars in the Balkans, Asia, Egypt and Gaul in 262–264

Even though it is certain that part of the Roman fleet was sent to Egypt with Theodotus, it is still very likely that Gallienus' military campaigns in the Balkans in 262–264 were also supported by the Praetorian fleets and probably also by civilian ships corveed for service. At the very least, Gallienus would have needed a fleet against the city of Byzantium and he would also have needed ships against the Gothic fleet and to transport men into Asia. What appears certain is that Gallienus faced very serious problems in the Balkans and Asia which he needed to settle once and for all.

According to the *HA*, Gallienus advanced immediately against the city of Byzantium after he had concluded his war against Postumus, presumably in 262. This campaign took place at the same time as the Goths were ravaging Bithynia, where they destroyed many cities including Astacus/Nicomedia. As noted above, it is probable that the naval forces posted at Byzantium had refused to cooperate with Marcianus against these Goths and it was because of this that Gallienus besieged Byzantium. According to the *HA*, the siege of Byzantium, which was famous for its naval battles, was very short (see the map on p.xv). Gallienus was admitted into the city the very next day. The probable reason for this is that the soldiers could expect clemency because Gallienus had previously pardoned Aureolus. However, contrary to the agreement that Gallienus had made with the defenders, he placed a ring of armed soldiers around the disarmed soldiers and had them all killed. This is probably the incident in which Gallienus is said to have had 3,000–4,000 soldiers killed in a single day. Gallienus also allowed his soldiers to kill and pillage without any restraints so that all of the inhabitants of the city are said to have been butchered in a bloodbath of horrendous proportions. This sort of ploy was certainly an effective means of fighting against one's own soldiers, but it could work only once because nobody would trust similar promises in the future. At about the same time as this happened, Gallienus' *duces* routed the Goths in Asia with the result that the Goths fled back to their homes. These events prove that Gallienus had come equipped with a fleet that he used to besiege the city of Byzantium while another part of the fleet was used to ship men across the straits into Asia to complete the destruction of the Gothic forces which had been started by Marcianus in the Balkans. It is probable that these *duces* included the future usurper Saturninus.³⁸

The *HA* claims that after Gallienus had butchered the soldiers at Byzantium he hastened back to Rome in a rapid march to celebrate his

Decennial in great style. This means that the campaign in the Balkans was completed probably in the spring or early summer of 262. The *HA* describes the Decennial celebrations in some detail. I agree with Bray that the description is entirely plausible. The procession of Gallienus included the senators and equestrians dressed in togas, soldiers dressed all in white (this was a high honour), populace, slaves, women, oxen, lambs, ten elephants, 1,200 gladiators dressed as women, actors, pantomimes, and boxers wearing soft boxing gloves. The actors acted a comic pornographic Cyclops-performance to the great delight of the populace. On each side of the emperor were borne 500 golden spears, 100 *vexilla* of the *collegia*, and the *dracones* and *signa* of all the legions.

The *vexilla* of the *collegia* are usually thought to refer to the flags of the corporations of the city, but in my opinion it is actually likelier that these *collegia* mean the military associations known as *collegia* (sing. *collegium*) which met in the *scholae* (schools, singular *schola*). The appearance of the civilian corporations in the midst of the military units is quite unlikely. In other words, it is likely that these flags belonged to the new imperial cavalry bodyguard units that came to be known during the late empire as the *scholae* who served under the *Comes Domesticorum* who in turn served under the *Magister Officiorum*. If each *vexillum* meant a 32-horseman *turma*, then the strength of the cavalry *scholae* would have been 3,200 men plus the supernumeraries, but it should be kept in mind that this is pure guesswork. The advantage of this educated guess, however, is that it corresponds roughly with the figure of seven *scholae* for the eastern Empire in the late Roman *Notitia Dignitatum*, because their strength was about 3,500 men. Similarly, as will be made clear later, it is likely that Claudius was *Magister Officiorum* in 268.

The referral to the *dracones* and *signa* of the legions may imply the existence of cavalry 'legions' that had *dracones* as their standards and infantry legions that had *signa* as their standards. This conclusion is supported by John Lydus' reference to cavalry and infantry legions that both consisted of 6,000 men and by the separate use of these arms of service under Gallienus, but it is of course still possible that the *dracones* meant only the legionary cavalry accompanying the footmen.

There were also jesters among the crowd, who supported either Postumus, Regalianus, Aureolus, Aemilianus or Saturninus. These jesters did not arouse Gallienus' ire, but some fools who acted as if

they were searching for Valerian among the Persian captives aroused Gallienus unrelenting anger. He ordered them to be burned alive, which in turn is said to have angered the populace, but it is possible that this is later anti-Gallienus propaganda. However, if true, Gallienus clearly had a bad conscience because he had done nothing to help his father. The important point here is that the *HA* claims that Saturninus had usurped power just before the Decennalia, which means that the crushing of his revolt was next in the agenda of Gallienus.³⁹

Zosimus 1.38 mentions the conspiracies of Memor the Moor, Aureolus, Antoninus and many others occurring at about the same time, of whom only Aureolus was spared. The revolt of Memor the Moor is confirmed by the fragment of the Continuator of Dio/Peter the Patrician f.177. According to the Continuator, Memor was immediately killed by the soldiers after he had started a rebellion during a foraging expedition. According to the report given by the prefect of Egypt Theodotus to the emperor, the assassination had been necessary. Gallienus accepted the explanation!⁴⁰ This leaves the revolt of Antoninus unexplained. The *HA* mentions several usurpers, but only one of these could fit the bill, namely Saturninus. Despite the fact that the *HA* insists that there were two usurpers with the name Saturninus, one during Gallienus' reign and the other during Probus' reign, modern historians almost unanimously consider this Saturninus an invention of the author of the *HA*. It is also clear that this Saturninus was not the Saturninus who shared the consulship with Gallienus in 264 because the *HA* claims that he was in revolt at the time Gallienus celebrated his Decennalia. However, there may be more to the story of the *HA* than meets the eye because the revolt of Saturninus would explain why Gallienus returned to the Balkans after his Decennalia rather than continued his campaign against Postumus in Gaul!

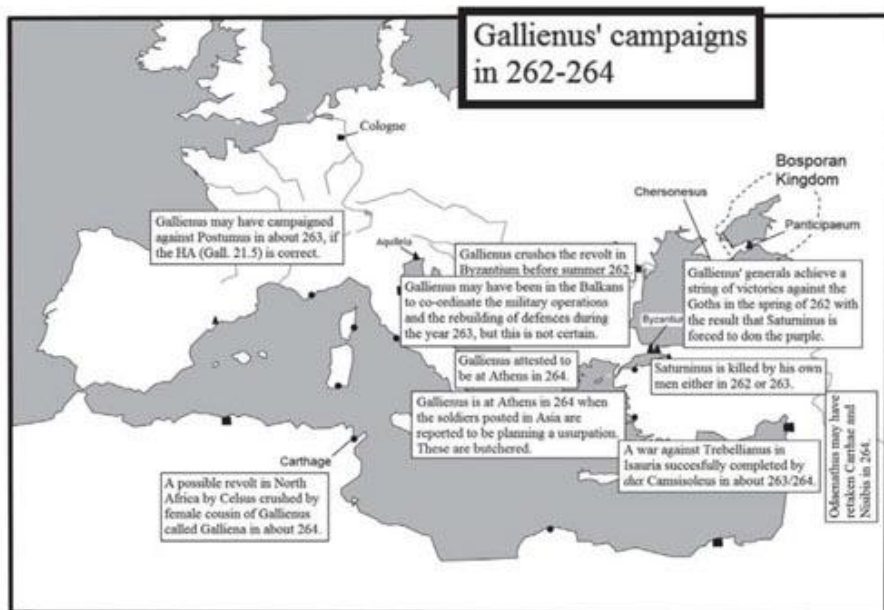
In sum, it appears quite probable that Saturninus and Antoninus are the same person, Antoninus Saturninus, and that his soldiers clothed him in imperial robes against his own wishes, as claimed by the *HA*. It is also very likely that this Antoninus Saturninus is the same person as Avulnius Saturninus, the general previously in command of the Scythian frontier⁴¹ who the *HA* (Aur 13.1) claims to have attended the meeting of Valerian's generals at Byzantium in 255 (see above). According to the *HA*, on the occasion of his acclamation Saturninus uttered: "Fellow-soldiers, you have lost a good general and made a bad emperor."⁴² After this, he supposedly did fight with some success

against the enemy (presumably the Goths), but was then killed by his own soldiers because he kept too harsh a discipline. The most likely reasons for his death are that his army decided to kill their harsh commander when they faced the victorious army of Gallienus or his generals, or alternatively that Gallienus' special operatives assassinated him with the help of Saturninus' troops. The likeliest explanation is that Saturninus' soldiers simply tried to ingratiate themselves with Gallienus when they understood that Gallienus was approaching with his elite *equites*, but then made the mistake of revolting again in 264 (see below). With the exception of sparing Aureolus, Gallienus was absolutely ruthless in suppressing all pockets of resistance to his rule during the years 261–264.

On the basis of the *HA* (*Gall.* 11), it is probable that the butchery/purge at Byzantium was not enough to put a stop to the mutinous state of the soldiers in Asia, and they did not stop conspiring against Gallienus even after they had killed their emperor Saturninus. According to the *HA*, when Gallienus was holding the office of *archon* at Athens and taking part in the Elysian Mysteries, he received the news that the soldiers were planning to choose a new emperor because the war against the Scythians had continued in Cappadocia and Bithynia. This places the event to the year 264, which probably means that Gallienus had spent the year 263 also in the Balkans reorganizing its shattered defences, but it is possible that Gallienus had been again in Gaul fighting against Postumus if the *HA* (*Gall.* 21.5) is correct in stating that Gallienus fought against Postumus after his Decennial. In this case the wounding would have been the likely reason for the abandonment of the campaign and for the subsequent holiday in Greece. The evidence is just too poor to make any definite conclusions. What appears certain is that the war in Gaul continued in some form also in 263 and that Gallienus spent at least part of the year 264 as a tourist, like Hadrian had done, in the city of Athens, and this at a time when the fighting was still going on in Asia Minor. This sort of behaviour would have undoubtedly angered at least some of the more conservative-minded uncultured soldiers and officers, and it is quite possible that it was the reason for the mutinous state of the Asian soldiers.

At first Gallienus tried to placate the Asian soldiers with promises and bribes, but when this failed he had them all put to death. This time their threat had to be eliminated permanently, but it is probable that this resulted at least partially from the distrust that the soldiers

had towards Gallienus after his own treacherous behaviour at Byzantium. However, this time the butchery worked and their gruesome fate appears to have put a stop to all usurpation attempts in the Balkans and Asia. However, it is still probable that the massive butchery of soldiers in the Balkans and Asia together with all the previous military disasters weakened the defences of both areas so badly that this section of the frontier remained vulnerable to hostile action when the next invasion by the Goths and Heruls took place in 266–267. Gallienus must have conscripted new green soldiers to replace those lost in wars, pestilences, revolts and usurpations. These cannot have been as effective as the veterans of several wars had been, but considering the circumstances Gallienus did not have any other choice than to butcher all those who opposed his rule.



As noted above, it is quite possible that it was during the campaigns of 262–264 that Gallienus reorganized the defences in the Balkans so that Siscia (mint attested in 262), Aquincum and Sirmium acquired additional detachments taken from units posted in Gaul and Britain, which were now under Postumus. The posting of these detachments to an area which was not facing Postumus and their ‘mother units’ was a wise policy. It is also possible that detachments attested for the cities of Aquileia and Poetovio, which must have been meant to protect the approaches into Italy from the Balkans, date from this period. Similarly, it is possible that Lychnidus obtained its garrison at this time to protect the Via Egnatia (see the discussion above). The only

thing that appears certain is that Gallienus strengthened the defences of Italy further at this time in 265 by fortifying Verona at the head of the road passing through the Brenner Pass.⁴³

Consequently, it is probable that Gallienus returned to Italy in about 264, celebrated a triumph, and assumed the well-earned title *magnus et invictus* which connected him with Alexander the Great and Antoninus the Great (Caracalla).⁴⁴ This was not mere propaganda as he had indeed won all of his battles. The only enemy left was Postumus, but Gallienus' previous successes against him must have made the emperor confident that he would be able to crush that usurper as well.

According to the *HA* (TR., 29), at some point in time during Gallienus' reign, at the instigation of Vibius Passienus proconsul of Africa and Fabius Pomponianus *Dux Limitis Libyci*, the Africans acclaimed a former tribune Celsus an emperor. However, he was then killed on the seventh day of his rule by a woman called Galliena, who is said to have been a cousin of Gallienus. His body was thrown to the dogs by the people of Sicca, who had remained loyal to Gallienus, and then an image of Celsus was nailed to a cross. None of the abovementioned names are known independently of the *HA*, and are therefore usually considered fictitious. However, in my view it is still difficult not to think that there must be at least a germ of truth behind the story. Why else would all of the sources refer to other brief usurpation attempts that were dealt with quickly? It is quite probable that there was also a usurper in Africa who was dispatched quickly by the loyalists of Gallienus in the province. If this revolt occurred at about the same time as that of Aemilianus, there would have been every chance of toppling Gallienus as Rome would not have received grain shipments either from Egypt or Africa, and this would certainly have explained why Gallienus remained in Italy in 261 when Aureolus engaged the Macriani – but unfortunately none of this is known with any amount of certainty.

Regarding the role of Galliena, Bray (333) considers her to be an invention of the author that he had concocted after seeing coins bearing the name Galliena. This is a possibility, but it is even likelier that there was indeed a cousin called Galliena who happened to live in Sicca with the result that the population showed their loyalty towards the ruling house by killing the usurper. There may also have been *frumentarii* and *protectores* among the retinues of Galliena and her enemies that she could have used to deal with the opposition

swiftly. I would suggest that it is possible or even probable that Gallienus celebrated the victory of his female cousin Galliena with the so-called Galliena coins struck in 265–266, meaning that the revolt of Celsus would have taken place in about 264. It is clear that this sort of gender-bending joke would have been quite upsetting to persons of a conservative disposition, but it would not have been untypical for the merry-making Gallienus to make such public jokes.

The *HA* (*TR* 26) also mentions a usurper named Trebellianus, who was made ruler of Isauria. In truth, Trebellianus was not a true usurper, even if he may have called himself an emperor in contempt of Rome, but in fact a chief of the Isaurian bandits and pirates. He is said to have ruled for some time before his demise, with the implication that he was probably killed some time after 262, perhaps in about 263/4. The Isaurian problem, however, appears to have begun when Valerian was in charge. The inscription from Oenoandae (Lycia) dated to 9 Nov. 256 by Saxer (54–5) states that Valerius Statilius Castus was acting as *praepositus vexillationum* in Lycia and Pisidia. According to the *HA*, Gallienus' *Dux* Camsisoleus, an Egyptian and brother of Theodotus, managed to bring Trebellianus down to the plains and then defeat and kill him. The Isaurians had learned their lesson. They never again dared to come to the plains for fear of Gallienus' revenge.

A papyrus (P.Oxy. IX 1194) refers to the arrears of *annona* during the campaign of Claudius Firmus, the Prefect of Egypt in 264, which means that Firmus had replaced Theodotus before that date.⁴⁵ This suggests that there were problems with the Blemmyes in the south of Egypt and that these were satisfactorily solved by Firmus in that very same year, despite the arrears of *annona*. If the feminine Galliena coins of the years 265–266 refer to the successful crushing of the revolt of Celsus in North Africa by Gallienus' unknown cousin Galliena, then it is possible that the entirety North Africa from Mauretania Tingitana to Egypt was undergoing prolonged problems, probably resulting from a change in climate which would have caused restlessness among the nomadic populations of the deserts throughout the region.⁴⁶

Chapter Seven

Gallienus: The Final Years 265–268: Success and Disaster

7.1 Gallienus Magnus et Invictus. His Year of Rest in 265

The sources do not give any significant events for the year 265.¹ It is possible that it was the time that he now devoted to the pleasures of life instead of fighting against Postumus or other enemies that resulted in the accusations of effeminate luxurious living. Consequently, Gallienus must have spent it in Rome, where he, together with his wife, would have indulged themselves in philosophical discussions with the famed philosopher Plotinus. Gallienus is said to have even contemplated the revival of a city in Campania as a city of philosophers called Platonopolis. However, the project is said to have been cancelled because some of the emperor's companions opposed it vehemently. In truth this may have been an excuse used by the emperor, because it is very likely that he had no intention of ever carrying it through. It is quite possible that he had meant his promise as a joke even if one cannot exclude the possibility that Gallienus and Salonina may have wanted to appear to be supportive of philosophers and philosophy in public in order to recall the past glory days of Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius and the Severans – or perhaps it was just because Gallienus had always been interested in philosophy and all things Greek.

It has also been suggested that Gallienus intended to use Plotinus's philosophical school as a counterforce against the Christians, but there exists no firm evidence for this. What is certain is that Gallienus's personality was the polar opposite of the serious Spartan Plotinus, who did not even eat meat or bathe, so that it is very difficult to think that Gallienus would have really been interested in following his philosophy. In contrast, Gallienus was a well-known lover of good food, joking, merry company and women, and bathed six or seven times a day, and in the winter twice or thrice, and he banqueted in public. He won the people's favour by his largess. His concubines reclined in his dining halls and there was always a table near at hand for jesters and actors. In true Hollywood-spectacle manner, he ordered that pipes were to be played when he entered the place/room and an organ when he left. He favoured the arts and theatre. His lifestyle and

beliefs can be described as late Epicurean even if we do not know definitely anything about his religious beliefs, except that he showed religious tolerance towards every kind of philosophy and religion and tried to canvass support from all religions simultaneously with his coins, images and policy. It should be noted that Origen describes the opponent of the Christians, Celsus, as being an Epicurean even if in practise he seems to have been an agnostic. Regardless, this still shows that there is some plausibility for the suggestion that Gallienus followed an Epicurean lifestyle and may also have been familiar with the philosophy behind it.²

However, even if Plotinus and his pupils, other philosophers, jesters, artists and Christians were Gallienus' friends, he also made many enemies in Rome. The sources are unanimous that Gallienus loved excessively bad company, women, wine and a luxurious lifestyle. He was known to frequent taverns, to associate himself with pimps, drunkards and actors, to sleep with concubines and whores, to maintain a shameful love affair with his barbarian concubine Pipa, and all the while he is claimed to have loved excessively his wife Salonina, who he even allowed to take part in councils. The presence of Salonina in the official councils of the state cannot have been to the liking of the conservative officers in his entourage. He was also a very cultured man well-versed in the study of Greek culture, so much so that he could also compose improvised verses. In short, he was an accomplished poet, orator and he excelled in all arts. This cannot have been to the liking of his lowly-born officers, who could interpret this as snobbish upper-class behaviour. In sum, Gallienus' behaviour in public cannot have endeared him with the ultra-conservative traditionalists who favoured more solemn behaviour.³

Gallienus was also known for his wit and oratory, but even this could work against him. When his father had been captured, it is reported that he said: 'I knew that my father was mortal'.⁴ When Gaul was lost he is said to have laughed and said: 'Can the Republic be safe without the Atrebatian cloaks?' When he was told of the revolt of Egypt, he is said to have called: 'What! We cannot do without Egyptian linen!' When he was told that Asia had been devastated as a result of the natural disasters and Scythian invasions, he is reported to have said: 'What! We cannot do without saltpetre!'⁵ He also put jewels in his boot-laces and called these boot reticulate, which were typically worn by women and effeminate men. This was clearly a joke, but it may also have been meant as an insult if it was directed against

upper-class Romans who wore bejewelled boots. These kinds of witticisms and jokes undoubtedly lightened the atmosphere, but cannot have been acceptable in the eyes of the pompous traditionalists. They must have considered these kinds of comments frivolous, but Gallienus did not stop at this. He also wore the radiate crown, purple cloak, sleeved tunic, and jewelled sword belt in Rome, where the senators expected him to wear a toga. This behaviour stressed the military nature of Gallienus' rule, which was an affront to the senators. As if this was not enough, Gallienus also invited matrons to his council.⁶

Basically, Gallienus acted in a manner expected of a good general or Epicurean, but in the wrong surroundings. It was good to try to maintain the morale of the common soldiery and populace with frivolities, but such comments could arouse a few eyebrows in the court and among the traditionalist Illyrian officers. In addition, he also seems to have made enemies with his practical jokes. While in Rome, he is said to have invited the prefects and *magistri officiorum* of all state departments to his banquets to bathe with him in the pools. His practical joke was that he also sometimes sent women in, beautiful girls for himself the emperor, and ugly old hags/ assholes ('*cum illis anus deformes*') with the others. It is possible that this joke turned his praetorian prefect against him (for this see the Plates Section). He is said to have favoured the Blue Faction (Malalas 12.14), which may also have created him enemies among the supporters of other factions, and in particular among the supporters of the Green Faction.

It is also probable that it was in about 265 that Gallienus began his most grandiose building project, as mentioned by the *Historia Augusta* (*Gall.* 18.2ff.), which was the building of the statue of himself as Sol located at the summit of the Esquiline Hill, and which was to be twice as big as the famous Colossus. The statue was also to hold a spear which was so large that children could climb to the top, and was to have a chariot and horses of the same huge proportions. According to the *HA*, the project seemed foolish to Claudius and after him to Aurelian, with the implication that the former did not yet stop the project and that the project was stopped by Aurelian possibly when he started the project of building new walls for the city of Rome. Gallienus' other major building project was the construction of a major portico along the Via Flaminia, but the *HA* fails to state what happened to this project. However, it is probable that this project was also abandoned under Aurelian. In light of the fact that Claudius did

not stop the project, it appears probable that the people and soldiers actually liked the grandiose project to commemorate their favourite ruler.

It is clear that the well-educated and cultured, very clever and witty, merry making, upper-class-dandy emperor who spoke with distinctly upper-class Latin and was fluent in Greek caused resentment among the less-educated conservative soldiers and officers. The Galliena coins, the dressing of gladiators as women, and Gallienus' own 'cross-dressing' habits did not help the situation.⁷ Even the frequent visits of Gallienus to taverns and whorehouses that made him more popular among the common soldiery would have worked against him among the conservative officers like Aurelian who did not approve of adultery.

Regardless, we should not forget that despite all the time spent in relaxing, Gallienus did not forget his imperial duties. He seems to have used this rest to reorganize the defences (e.g. the building of the walls of Verona took place in 265) and to prepare forthcoming invasions against his enemies: one against Postumus under his own leadership if such took place in 266–267 as appears very likely; and the other under Odaenathus against Persia. Both of these offensives, however, had to be abandoned in 267 when the barbarians broke through in the Balkans. It is also clear that Gallienus reorganized at least some of his defensive and offensive arrangements in 265, which included defensive arrangements in Italy and the Balkans. He further appears to have attempted to make usurpations less likely in the Balkans by dividing the command between at least three men and by using at least two native Greek commanders (*HA Gall.* 13.6ff.): the Byzantines Cleodamus and Athenaeus were deputed to repair and fortify the cities in 266–267 and the fleet was placed under Venerianus (presumably not a Greek).

7.2 The Wars in Gaul 263–269 and Gallienus' Third or Fourth Major Campaign against Postumus in 266–267

Postumus appears to have faced a series of problems after Gallienus withdrew from Gaul in about 261. The pause in fighting between Gallienus and Postumus after ca. 262 or 263 gave the latter the chance to rebuild his army and baptize it with military successes. As already noted, it was not until late 263 that Postumus could return to his capital. However, he could not yet give a sigh of relief and turn his attention against Gallienus. It is clear that Postumus had to fight wars

against the Germans and possibly also against generals of Gallienus at least until 264 because: he kept his field-mint in being in 264; there is an absence of gold for most of 264; and there are large numbers of coin-hoards datable to this period. It was only in late 268 that Postumus was finally able to settle his field-mint that had been in continuous existence since 263 in Cologne. The hoarding of coins shows that Postumus had to fight an almost-continuous war with the Germans and possibly also with Gallienus' generals during this time period, all of which he dealt with as best he could, sometimes with better success than at other times.⁸

The seriousness of the problems facing the Gallic Empire is evident from the fact that Postumus debased his coinage in 268.⁹ In that year, Postumus would have needed money more than ever because he had evidently lost access to the silver mines of Spain thanks to the presence of Gallienus' army. In addition, it is quite probable that the revolt of Laelianus against Postumus took place in about 267/8. As noted above, if the referrals to joint rule by Postumus and Victorinus in the *HA* mean their joint-consulships, then it is possible that one of Gallienus' major campaigns (probably the third or fourth one) took place in 266–267, with the result that the Gallic Empire was facing destruction until it was saved by the invasion of the Goths and Heruls. In other words, Postumus could count himself lucky once again for having been saved by others. The main reason for the financial problems of Postumus in 268 would naturally have been Gallienus' third/fourth major campaign if it took place during 266–267, and my learned guess is that it did.

It is clear that it was then in 268 after these crushing defeats that Postumus needed to bribe his army. Consequently, he minted large amounts of debased silver *antoniani* to bribe his men. I would suggest that the only reason why Postumus and Victorinus were able to prevail in such a crisis was that they managed to convert Aureolus to their cause in 268. It is in fact quite possible that Laelianus had deserted to Gallienus' side in 267 and that Aureolus had been posted in Raetia to support Laelianus, whose headquarters appears to have been at Mainz, and that Laelianus proclaimed himself Augustus in desperation only after Aureolus had been withdrawn to Milan while Gallienus marched to the Balkans. His position would have been desperate and the only way to survive would have been to canvas support. However, this is only my speculation based on the events and whereabouts of the persons at the time. The only thing that is certain

is that in the end it was Postumus who won the war against Laelianus. Postumus and Victorinus besieged Laelianus at Mainz and managed to have him killed by his own soldiers (*HA TR.* 5.3) probably in 268 or in the spring of 269. The soldiers clamoured to plunder the inhabitants of Mainz, because they had supported Laelianus, but Postumus is supposed to have made the inexplicable mistake of forbidding the looting and pillaging of the city. The soldiers naturally chose a new emperor and killed the ungrateful Postumus. The troops chose as new emperor Marius, who had had a phenomenal career. He had risen from the lowly position of blacksmith to that of *dux* and finally to that of emperor.¹⁰

However, it appears possible that the actual course of events was different. It is quite possible that the murder of Postumus was instigated by Victorinus, who was the person in charge of the operations at Mainz. It would not be improbable that he fabricated Postumus' order not to loot the city in order to instigate the revolt. In such a case, the rise of Marius to the throne would have resulted either from the unexpected turn of events (Marius exploiting the opportunity) or alternatively from a plot to cover up Victorinus' role in the events. The *HA* claims that Victorinus' mother Victoria/Vitruvia was behind the proclamation of Marius. This would suggest that she was the power behind Postumus' murder and that she had first put Marius forward as a candidate in order to cover up the tracks leading to Victorinus. This would have allowed Victorinus to present himself as the rightful heir and avenger of Postumus, or perhaps that the intention was to rule in the name of Marius. Whatever the truth, Victorinus or his mother had Marius assassinated within three days or twelve weeks. The killer was a disgruntled soldier who had been treated badly by Marius. According to the *HA (TR. Marius* 6–7), when the soldier thrust his weapon into Marius, he taunted him with the words that the sword that killed him had been forged by Marius himself. Victorinus had himself proclaimed an emperor by his army two days later, presumably in 269.

7.3 Odaenathus' Persian Campaign in 266–267 and his Assassination

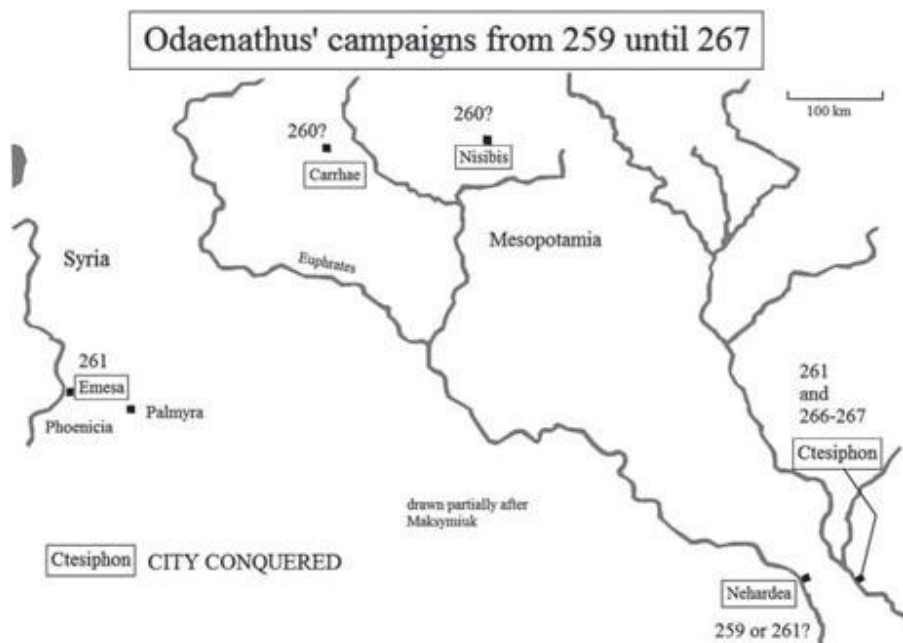
It is clear that it was in 265 that Gallienus decided that the time was ripe for a new invasion of Persia because we find Odaenathus leading such against Persia in the following year. It is quite clear that Gallienus had assembled an army under Roman generals during the winter 265–266, which then served under Odaenathus. On the basis of

Peter the Patrician, it has been suggested that Cocceius Rufinus, the governor of Roman Arabia, accompanied Odaenathus during the campaign and that it was this Rufinus that was subsequently behind the murder of Odaenathus. If this interpretation is correct then it is likely that Rufinus was a member of Gallienus' secret service, possibly with the title of *protector*, but in light of Thomas Banchich's excellent analysis of the text in question this seems very unlikely.

Odaenathus was the commander-in-chief of the whole campaign, and the Roman units were placed under his supervision. Odaenathus seems to have initially achieved considerable success and seems to have arrived better prepared in front of the Persian capital. He put Ctesiphon under siege. According to Syncellus (AM 2748) and Jerome (s.a. 266), Odaenathus eventually managed to take the city in 266 or 267. However, it was also about this time that news of the invasion of Asia Minor by the Scythians would have reached the ears of Odaenathus. The ever-loyal Odaenathus abandoned his campaign and returned back to face the Goths in Asia Minor, but before he could reach the scene the barbarian invaders had retreated with their booty.¹¹

The existence of two fragments of Peter the Patrician dealing with Odaenathus has caused plenty of speculation because these do not contain any secure details to date them. The first fragment includes the accusation by the younger Odaenathus that Rufinus had murdered the 'old Odaenathus' and the interrogation of Rufinus by Gallienus. Rufinus' excuse for the murder of Odaenathus was that he feared that Odaenathus was planning a revolt. Gallienus considered this answer satisfactory. Thomas M. Banchich (2015, pp.119–123) has proposed a very attractive solution to the problem of Rufinus and the murder of Odaenathus. He suggests that the fragment of the Continuator of Dio (i.e. Peter the Patrician) should be kept in its original place as found in the manuscript tradition (year 260–261) and that the incident actually refers to an exchange of words between Rufinus and Gallienus in 260–261, after Odaenathus had become a person to be appeased, the best evidence of which are the titles he was given. He suggests that this Aradius Rufinus was Q. Aradius Rufinus Optatus Aelianus who was governor of Syria (*legatus Augusti pro praetore*) in 228–230. It would have been then that Rufinus executed the 'old Odaenathus' (in truth Haerenus), the father of the famous Odaenathus, because he had conspired with the Sasanians. As stated by Banchich, this would explain why Gallienus was unaware of the reasons behind the murder

and why Odaenathus would have sent such a demand to Gallienus. The likeliest date for the making of such a demand to Gallienus is indeed the year 260–261. Odaenathus wanted a reward. In short, it is probable that Rufinus was not the man behind the murder of the famous Odaenathus.¹² In light of the fact that Rufinus was not punished, it is probable that Gallienus bribed Odaenathus with grandiose titles and that this would have been the peace that Gallienus is claimed to have concluded with Odaenathus in the *HA* (e.g. *Gall.* 21.5).



Thanks to the scanty evidence the details regarding the campaigns of Odaenathus are subject to the same kind of guesswork as practically everything during this period. It is possible that Odaenathus captured the city of Neharde in 259 in a diversionary campaign while Shapur was invading Roman territory or that he captured it only when he pursued the retreating Persians in about 260-261. Regardless, it is clear that he had a decisive role in forcing the Persians out of the Roman territory in 260-261 and that he pursued the enemy up to Ctesiphon which he apparently failed to take at this time. It was then that he returned back to the Roman territory where he crushed Quintus and Ballista on behalf of Gallienus also in 261. On the basis of the *HA*, it is possible that Odaenathus recaptured Carrhae and Nisibis from the Persians in 264, but modern historians usually date their recapture to the year 261 or 262 while in my opinion the recapture would have taken place already in 260 if it happened during the first

campaign. I would not preclude the possibility that the *HA* would be correct in its dating in this case. Odaenathus' second major campaign against the Persians took place in 266-267 and it was then that he captured Ctesiphon. He was forced to abandon this campaign as well to return back to the Roman territory against the Goths, but was murdered while en route. For additional information regarding the sources and for alternative explanations, see Maksymiuk, 44ff.

The second problematic fragment refers to the Cyrinus incident already mentioned. Peter claims that one Cyrinus (probably Aurelius Quirinus, formerly head of the financial administration of Egypt under Valerian) was greatly displeased that Odaenathus took over the wars of the Romans against Persia. When Odaenathus learned this, he ordered Cyrinus executed, but simultaneously tried to placate the Romans by lavishing many gifts for his funeral. In the paranoid atmosphere of the 260s, this attempt at appeasement would have been doomed to fail, but the problem with this is that it is probable that the execution of Cyrinus took place roughly in 260–261, as suggested by Banchich (see my comments regarding this above). In sum, it is clear that both fragments belong to their places in the manuscript tradition and describe the events of 260–261.¹³

As noted above, it was not fated that Odaenathus would defeat the Gothic invaders in 267. He was either assassinated and/or the invaders retreated before he could do that. The sources give various different versions of the assassination of Odaenathus. What is clear is that the assassin seems to have been a disgruntled relative of Odaenathus who may have been incited to this act by Zenobia, Persians or Romans. According to the first version, Odaenathus' cousin Maeonius murdered both Odaenathus and his eldest son Herodes. According to the second version, Zenobia had formed a conspiracy with Maeonius to murder Odaenathus together with Herodes (Odaenathus' son by a previous wife) so that her biological sons would succeed him. According to the third version, preserved by John of Antioch (f.152), Gallienus was behind the murders of Odaenathus and Herodes, but in such a manner that Zenobia avenged Odaenathus' death through his friends, presumably implying that Zenobia would have had some role in the subsequent murder of Gallienus or in the defeat of Heraclianus.¹⁴ The fourth version is that Odaenathus was murdered by his bodyguard. The fifth version is that Odaenathus had treated his nephew so haughtily that the latter murdered him and Herodes in a fit of anger during a drinking party. In all of the versions

the killer is equally swiftly killed and the King of Kings succeeded by his wife Zenobia, who became acting regent of her sons Herennianus and Timolaus.¹⁵

If one tries to put together the likeliest reconstruction for Odaenathus' Persian campaign in 266–267 and then for his murder, it is that in 266–267 Odaenathus acted as Gallienus' loyal commander who was murdered either as a result of a personal grudge by his nephew or cousin, or as a result of a conspiracy of his wife Zenobia. It is unlikely that Gallienus would have been behind the murder in a situation in which Odaenathus and Herodes had shown their loyalty repeatedly, but of course one cannot entirely rule out the possibility that Gallienus could have orchestrated their murder, for example with Zenobia. The 266–267 campaign appears to have been only a partial success despite the capture of Ctesiphon because the Palmyrenes did not continue their campaigns against the Persians after this. The casualties must have been significant for this to be the case. The immediate reason for the withdrawal of the Palmyrene-Roman army from Ctesiphon was the invasion of Asia Minor by the Heruls and Goths, and the continuing existence of this threat in the coming years would have made it necessary for the Palmyrenes and Romans not to start new campaigns in the east, but to keep their armies in readiness to engage the Goths and Heruls if they threatened Asia Minor again. It was ultimately the responsibility of Zenobia to protect the east.

The *Historia Augusta* (Gallienus 13.4–5; REF 85) mentions that after the death of Odaenathus, Gallienus gathered an army under Heraclianus against the Persians, but then claims that this army was defeated by the Palmyrenes and all the troops were lost because Zenobia was ruling Palmyra and most of the east with the vigour of a man. However, we know that the Praetorian prefect Heraclianus was with Gallienus in 268. There are basically three possible explanations for this: firstly, that Heraclianus served under Odaenathus during the campaign of 266–267 and had lost most of his troops; secondly, that after the death of Odaenathus, Gallienus simply sent Heraclianus along with reinforcements to the east; or thirdly, that it was Claudius who sent Heraclianus against Zenobia and the Persians.¹⁶ The last mentioned is the likeliest on the basis of the fact that the relationship with Palmyra remained amicable under Gallienus and that it was only late in Claudius' reign that the Palmyrenes started their hostilities, which implies that it had been the Romans who had broken the peace. I am not alone in my suspicions. For example Potter has conjectured

(p. 266) that we should place Heraclianus' campaign in the east to Claudius' reign rather than to Gallienus' reign. There is no doubt whatsoever that Zenobia and her son remained loyal subjects of Rome as long as Gallienus was alive because their coins prove this to be the case – perhaps Gallienus and Zenobia had indeed plotted together in the murder of Odaenathus. In the very unlikely case that Heraclianus had been sent by Gallienus to the East, it is probable that Heraclianus had been sent to bring her Roman reinforcements that would have been needed to replace the losses incurred during Odaenathus' campaign: Odaenathus' victory over Persia had been a Pyrrhic victory. One final possibility could also be that Heraclianus' mission in the east would have been to nominate someone else to succeed Odaenathus as *corrector* and that his defeat was the refusal of Zenobia to hand over her powers to such a candidate, meaning that Zenobia 'defeated' Gallienus.

As noted, there was not yet a break up of relations between Palmyra and Rome. Gallienus was in the middle of fighting a war against the invading Goths, and Zenobia could with some justification claim that the Romans and Palmyrenes had suffered such numerous casualties as to make any new invasion of Persia untenable and that the Gothic threat to Asia Minor made all campaigns against Persia foolish. It is also clear that Gallienus and Zenobia were on friendly terms and may even have cooperated in the murder of Odaenathus (if they were party to such) or in the purge of his murderers. Both had mutual interests to defend the east against foreign invaders as this was very detrimental to international trade and tax gathering.

7.4The Riders of the Storm: the Invasions of the Goths and Heruli in 266–268

I have assumed in the following discussion the stance that all of the major battles against the Goths and Heruli that the sources claim to have taken place under Claudius II actually took place previously during the reign of Gallienus. This is proven by the existence of clear doublets (Goths besieged in their wagon laager on a mountain), and most importantly by the fact that the sources clearly place Claudius away from the theatre of operations for the period of his own reign. The reason for Claudius' ability to claim the victories as his own is that he was really in charge of the operations as Gallienus' second-in-command during the battles in question. In other words, I have accepted here Alföldi's main argument (*CAH* pp.149–150) that the invasion was actually crushed during the reign of Gallienus and that

the mopping up was performed under his two successors Claudius II Gothicus and Aurelian, but with the difference that I place all of the major actions taken by Claudius against the Goths to the period when he was still serving under Gallienus and that the mopping up was actually performed by Marcianus and Aurelian.¹⁷ Claudius appears to have died in Sirmium while still en route to the theatre of operations.

The sequence of events as described by the *HA* shows clearly that all of the major victories were achieved while Gallienus was still the emperor. It clearly preserves two separate traditions: the one found in the *Vita Gallieni* and the other in the *Divus Claudius*. When one combines this with the information given by Zosimus, who falsely claims that the major battles took place under Claudius, one is at a position to reconstruct the main features of this war. The following includes long quotes from the *HA* and Zosimus to show which portions of the war belong to the reign of Gallienus.

During the reign of Gallienus

(HA Gall. 12.6–13.2, tr. by Magie, p.43 with comments added inside parentheses)

But while Odaenathus was busied with the war against the Persians [in 266–267] and Gallienus was devoting himself to foolish pursuits [implies that Gallienus was still at Rome or in Italy enjoying the benefits of being emperor whereas in truth he may have been fighting against Postumus], ... the Scythians built ships and advanced upon Heraclea [presumably the city of Heraclea south-west of Byzantium] and thence returned with booty to their native land, although many were lost by shipwreck or defeated in a naval engagement [the fleet in question would have consisted of the ships stationed at Byzantium and/or at Cyzicus. The details suggest that the Roman fleet engaged the Goths when they were returning]. About this same time Odaenathus was treacherously slain ... [this would have taken place probably in early 267 when Odaenathus had returned from Persia to engage the Goths who had been ravaging Asia Minor].

(HA Gall. 13.6–14.2, tr. by Magie 45–47 with my comments inside parentheses)

Meanwhile the Scythians sailed across the Black Sea [presumably in 267] and, entering the Danube, did much damage ... Gallienus deputed Cleodamus and Athenaeus the Byzantines [note the use of Greeks as duces] to repair and fortify the cities, and a battle was fought near the Black Sea, in which the barbarians were conquered by the Byzantine leaders. The Goths were also defeated in a naval battle by

the [dux] Venerianus, though Venerianus himself died a soldier's death.¹⁸ Then the Goths ravaged Cyzicus and Asia [*these are still the united forces; it is of note that the invaders ravaged Cyzicus, the naval HQ of the Black Sea Fleet, which means that whatever ships were still at its port were now lost. However, the following account of Zosimus actually suggests that the Goths were unable to take Cyzicus, which would mean that they ravaged the territory around it, but were actually prevented from taking the city by the Roman fleet. In this case it is probably better to follow Zosimus.*] and then all of Achaea [*these are the Heruls*], but were vanguished by the Athenians under the command of Dexippus, ... Driven thence, they roved through Epirus, Macedonia and Boeotia [*Epirus and Boeotia were presumably ravaged by the Heruls who were defeated separately and Macedonia by the Goths*]. Gallienus, meanwhile, ... met the Goths as they roved about in Illyricum,¹⁹ and ...killed a great number [i.e. *Gallienus defeated the Goths in military action which may have included skirmishes and battles; it is probable that this included the famous battle of Naissus in Illyricum*]. ... the Scythians, after making a barricade of wagons, attempted to escape by way of Mount Gessaces [*Note this successful use of guerrilla warfare against the invaders and the referral to large numbers of killed, which forced the Goths to flee to a mountain. Mt. Gessaces is unknown, but it is probable that the purpose was to hide that it was Mt. Haemimontum/Haemus in Thrace*]. ...Marcianus made war on all the Scythians with varying success [*Gallienus left Marcianus in the Balkans, when he had to return back to Italy to crush the revolt of Aureolus.*] ... Marcianus and Heraclianus formed a plan that one of them should take imperial power [*This refers to the assassination plot that these persons formed when besieging Aureolus in Milan*].

(HA Claudius 6.6–9.9, tr. by Magie 163–9 with my comments.) The HA claims that the action took place under Claudius, but the details actually make it absolutely certain that it was only the mopping up that was left to Claudius. Note which parts of it correspond with the above!

...There were three hundred and twenty thousand armed men! Add to these their slaves, add also their families, their wagon-trains, ... These barbarians, then, Claudius overcame [i.e. *this was the mopping up of the remnants*]. ... And so do we writers flatter Claudius! the man... by whom a wagon-train, ... was in part consigned to the flames and in part delivered over, along with the families of all to Roman servitude ... We have captured so many women that the victorious soldiers can take for themselves two or three apiece [*if there were roughly as many women in the wagon train as there were fighting men, which is possible if*

daughters accompanied them as is likely, then there were about 106,000–160,000 men in the Roman armed forces serving under Gallienus/Claudius. This figure is not at all impossible when one remembers how many men were needed to man the ships]. ... there was fighting in Moesia and there were battles near Marcianopolis [*this refers to the initial stage of the invasion when Cleodamus and Athenaeus engaged the invaders successfully*]. Many perished by shipwreck, many ... captured, ... There was fighting besides in Byzantium, ... [*This implies a naval battle and it is possible that it was the one fought by Venerianus*]. There was fighting at Thessalonica, to which the barbarians had laid siege while Claudius was far away [*This refers to the stage when the Goths had beached their ships and had begun the siege, and from where they then advanced against the approaching Gallienus whose army included Claudius*]. There was fighting in divers places, and in all of them, ... the Goths were defeated.

(*HA Claudius 11.3–12.1, tr. by Magie 173–175 with my comments.*) *The HA claims that the action took place under Claudius, but the details actually make it absolutely certain that these took place under Gallienus*

...the barbarian tribes, who had gathered in Haemimontum were so stricken with famine and pestilence that Claudius now scorned to conquer them any further. ... at the time when the victory was won in full a number of Claudius' soldiers, puffed up with success ... turned to plundering ... And so, at the very moment of victory, about 2,000 soldiers were slain by a few barbarians, who had already been routed. [*This refers to a situation in which the enemy had not yet been defeated and the war had certainly not ended. It clearly refers to the situation in which the Goths had been forced to seek safety on Mt. Gassaces/Haemus. On the basis of the HA Aur. 18.1, it was probably then that the 'magistri' of cavalry acted rashly without the emperor's orders and were replaced by Aurelian.*] When Claudius learned this [*he would have acted as Gallienus' general and probably saved the situation in this battle*],... he assembled his army and seized all those who had shown rebellious spirit, and he even sent them to ... the public spectacles. ... During that same period the Scythians attempted to plunder Crete and Cyprus... but everywhere their armies were likewise stricken with pestilence and so were defeated [*The fact that according to Zosimus 1.44.2 Tenagino Probus was appointed by Claudius in ca. 269 to clear the Aegean Sea of pirates does not mean that he would have been the person responsible for the defeat of invaders at Crete and Cyprus, because the above account clearly dates these successes also to the reign of Gallienus. I*

would suggest that it was the handiwork of the Imperial Fleet under admiral Cleodemus who would have isolated the enemy. However, it is still probable that it was Probus who defeated the remnants of these invading forces and who also got the credit for the successes of his predecessor just like Claudius did].

During the Reign of Claudius

(HA Claudius 6.1., tr. by Magie p.163 with my comment inside parenthesis)

... For, as we have said before, those Goths who had escaped when Marcianus chastised them ... fire all the tribes ... with the hope of Roman booty. Finally, the various tribes of the Scythians, the Peucini [named after Peuce Island in the Danube; note that this refers to the above-mentioned entering of the Danube], Greuthungi, Austrogothi, Tervingi, Visi, and the Gepids, and also the Celts and the Eruli, in their desire for plunder burst into Roman territory... for meanwhile Claudius was busied with other things [this was his war against the Alamanni]...

(HA Aur. 16.4–17.5, tr. by Magie pp. 225–227 with my comments inside parentheses)

... the Deified Claudius entrusted the whole conduct of the war against the Maeotidae [Heruls, but the following makes it clear that it meant the war against the Goths] to ... Aurelian. ... [The following are claimed to be the words of Claudius to Aurelian:] The Goths must be crushed, [and] ... driven from Thrace. [The Goths are] raving Haemimuntum and Europe, those very same ones who fled when you fought against them [i.e. during the reign of Gallienus]. I now place under your command all the armies in Thrace, all in Illyricum, and, in fact, the whole frontier; ... My brother Quintillus, ... will also give you his aid. Busied as I am with other tasks, I am entrusting to your valour the whole of this war [i.e. it was not Claudius who conducted the war against the Goths] So making use of success won in battles under Claudius' auspices, he brought back the empire to its previous condition and was at once, as we have related before, declared emperor by the unanimous voice of all the legions [Aurelian became emperor in 270 after the death of Claudius].

Zosimus 1.39.1–46.2, English tr. by unknown hand, possibly by J. Davis (London 1814, pp.21–24) with my comments inside parentheses. I have also replaced one inaccurate translation with the more accurate one by Ridley.

During the Reign of Gallienus:

... The Scythians, who had dreadfully afflicted the whole of Greece, had now taken Athens, when Gallienus advanced against those who were in possession of Thrace, and ordered Odonathus of Palmyra [*Odaenathus*], a person whose ancestors had always been highly respected by the emperors, to assist the eastern nations which were then in a very distressed condition. Accordingly, having joined to the remainder of an army that still remained in the country [*note that Odaenathus commanded regular Roman forces*] many of his own troops, he attacked Sapor, ... Then advancing, ..., but a second time as far as Ctesiphon, ... Shortly afterwards, whilst residing at Emisa, he lost his life by a conspiracy. [*Odaenathus was murdered at Emesa when he was marching against the Goths as ordered to do by Gallienus*] While affairs were thus situated in the east, intelligence was brought to Gallienus, who was then occupied in the Scythian war, that Aurelianus, or Aureolus, who was the commander of the cavalry posted in the neighbourhood of Milan [*Mediolanum*] to watch the motions of Posthumus, had formed some new design, and was ambitious to be emperor. ... he went immediately to Italy, leaving the command against the Scythians with Marcianus, a person of great experience in military affairs. While he carried on the war with great ability, Gallienus, in his journey to Italy, had a plot formed against him by Heraclianus, prefect of the court, who communicated his design to Claudius, in whom the chief management of affairs was vested [*it is probable that he was tribunus et magister officiorum*]. The design was to murder Gallienus. Having found a man very ready for such an undertaking, who commanded a troop of Dalmatians [*Ceronius/Cecropius: see later*], he entrusted the action to him. To effect it, the party stood by Gallienus at supper and informed him that some of the spies had brought intelligence, that Aureolus and his army were close at hand. ... Calling immediately for his horse and arms, he mounted, ordering his men to follow him in their armour, and rode away without attendance. Thus the captain finding him alone killed him. ... Claudius was chosen emperor, ...

[*Here begins a description of the war that had taken place under Gallienus as is well proven by the account in the HA, but which Zosimus has placed in the reign of Claudius*]

The Scythians were by this time so elated by their former success [*This is clearly entirely out of place here because the above text has already informed us that Gallienus and Marcianus had conducted their war against the Scythians with great ability. In truth this piece of text refers to the*

situation at the beginning of the great invasion in 267], that they appointed a place of meeting with the Heruli, Peucaea [*the Peuci lived on Peuce Island in the Danube and therefore joined the Goths and Heruls when they sailed to the Danube*], and Gothi, near the river Tyra [Dniester; *this means that the Romans had probably lost their naval base at the mouth of this river and probably also all those north of it, including the major naval base at Olbia at the mouth of the River Bug.*] which empties itself into the Pontus [*the Black Sea*]; where having built six thousand vessels, and put on board them three hundred and twenty thousand men, they sailed across the Pontus, and made an attempt on Tomes [Tomi], a fortified town, but were repulsed from it. From thence they proceed[ed] to Marcianopolis, a city of Mysia [*Moesia*], but failing there likewise in their attack on it [*It is probable that this refers to the battle near the Black Sea in which Athenaeus and Cleodamus defeated the invaders in a battle*], they took the opportunity of a favourable wind and sailed forward. On their arrival at the streights [straits] of Propontis, they could not manage their vessels in so violent a current, and while they were carried down by it without any order, they fell foul on each other, by which some of them were sunk, and others driven on shore, to the great destruction both of men and ships. On this account the barbarians departed from the Propontis, and sailed towards Cyzicus. Being obliged to return from thence without success [*This may mean the naval battle with Verenianus mentioned by the HA or a separate naval battle. This account also suggests that the referral to the ravaging of Cyzicus in the HA meant only the ravaging of the region around it.*] they passed through the Hellespont, and arrived at Mount Athos. Having there refitted and careened their vessels, they laid siege to Cassandria and Thessalonica, which they were near taking by means of machines which they raised against the walls. But hearing that the emperor [*this means Gallienus*] was advancing with an army, they went into the interior, plundering all the neighbourhood of Doberus and Pelagonia. There they sustained a loss of three thousand men, who were met with by the Dalmatian cavalry, and with the rest of their force engaged the army of the emperor. [*I have here replaced the old translation with the more accurate translation of Ridley p.14: "In the battle, although many fell on both sides and the Romans were defeated, they were still able to ambush the barbarians on lonely roads and kill fifty thousand of them"*] [*This clearly means that Gallienus used guerrilla warfare mainly with cavalry forces with which he was able to ambush all those who had separated from the main force*]. The remainder of the Scythians sailed round Thessaly and Greece to pillage all the country,

and as they were not strong enough to attack towns which had fortified themselves, and provided for their own security, they carried off all the men that they found in the open country [*This probably refers to the Heruls who were defeated by Dexippus and Roman naval commanders and whose leader eventually concluded a treaty with Gallienus: see below*].

The Scythians being thus dispersed, with the loss of great part of their troops, Zenobia began to think of extending her dominion [*Zosimus is telescoping events here, because the dispersal of Goths took place only after the battle of Mount Haemus while the revolt of Zenobia took place in 270*], ... the Barbarians, who survived the Battle of Naissus between Claudius and the Scythians [*in truth Gallienus*], defending themselves with their carriages which went before them, marched towards Macedon, but were so distressed by the want of necessities, that many of them and of their beasts perished with hunger. They were met likewise by the Roman cavalry, who having killed many of them, drove the rest towards Mount Haemus [*As noted above, this happened during the reign of Gallienus*]; where being surrounded by the Roman army, they lost a vast number of men. But a quarrel ensuing between the Roman horse and foot soldiers [*This suggests that these had separate commanders!*], the emperor wishing the foot to engage the Barbarians, the Romans, after a smart engagement, were defeated with considerable loss, but the cavalry, coming up immediately, redeemed in some degree the miscarriage of the infantry. [*Gallienus clearly used his cavalry forces for most of the operations, but when the enemy had been pinned on a mountain, he wisely chose to use infantry. However, when the infantry proved unable to defeat the Goths, the cavalry reserves saved them*] After this battle, the Barbarians proceeded on their march, and were pursued by the Romans. [*This refers to the final days of Gallienus when Marcianus was in charge and to the beginning of Claudius' reign when Marcianus and then Aurelian did the same. Of particular note is the fact that Marcianus was actually far more successful in his operations against the Goths than Aurelian was: see later.*]

Zosimus: During the Reign of Claudius:

The pirates who cruised about Crete and Rhodes retired without doing any thing worthy of mention [*These are probably a separate third division of 'Scythians' who had been separated as a result of poor naval skills. These are likely to be the barbarians who attempted to take the city of Side during the reign of Gallienus. It is in fact possible that the raiding of Crete and Rhodes took place also during the reign of Gallienus. The other*

less likely alternatively is that these were the Heruls who advanced first to Achaea and Peloponnesus and from there to the islands]; being attacked by the plague on their way home, some died in Thrace and some in Macedon. All that survived were either admitted into the Roman legions, or had lands assigned for them to cultivate and so became husbandmen. [*This refers to the final phase of the war when Aurelian conducted the guerrilla campaign against the enemy under Claudius*] Nor was the plague confined to the Barbarians alone, but began to infest the Romans, many of whom died, and amongst the rest Claudius, a person adorned with every virtue. ...

The above account should make it absolutely clear that all of the decisive battles at Naissus and then near Mt. Haemus had been fought during the reign of Gallienus, and that the mopping up of the remnants of the enemy force was left to Marcianus and then to Aurelian and other generals serving under him. When one adds to these two accounts other scattered information in the *HA* and other pieces of information from other sources, one is in a position to reconstruct the main features of this war under Gallienus and Claudius. The following is my attempt to do that.

The major attack against the Romans had begun with the Gothic attack in 266, in the course of which they pillaged Heraclea and Asia Minor. It is probable that this attack was part of the invasion that forced Odaenathus to abandon his Persian campaign. Despite the losses incurred in a naval battle and in storms, most of them were able to return. According to Jordanes (Get. 106–109), who probably confuses two campaigns, the Goths built ships and invaded Asia Minor. The invaders, who were led by Respa, Veduc and Thuruar, sacked Troy, Ilium, Chalcedon and the Temple of Diana near Ephesus after which they began their retreat. It was presumably then that they received the news of the approach of Odaenathus who had halted his Persian campaign. At some point during their campaign, most likely when the invaders were already withdrawing, the Roman fleet engaged them near the mouth of Black Sea and inflicted a crushing defeat on them (*HA, Gall.* 12.6). If the coin (Antoninianus) with Fortuna holding a rudder and *conrnucoptiae* minted at Milan is dated correctly to the year 266 on the Wildwinds website, then this coin may have been issued to celebrate this victory as propaganda. Due to their poor naval skills, the Goths also lost many ships in shipwrecks. According to Jordanes, the Gothic fleet sacked the city of Anchialus en route back home. Since the *HA* claims that Gallienus sent Athenaeus and

Cleodamus to repair and fortify the cities and we find these two commanders present during the major Gothic invasion of the year 267, it is clear that Gallienus had sent them to the area as a result of the invasion of the year 266 to repair damages caused to Anchialus and other similarly-sacked places. The fact that most of the Goths were still able to return home with booty appears to have encouraged a mass migration of Goths and others in a situation in which they faced other enemies in the steppes. The great numbers given to the invaders and the presence of wagon laagers make it clear that the invaders were accompanied by families. The Goths and others assembled their forces at the mouth of the Dniester where they built ships for the transport of the men and non-combatants.

The sources give us different figures for the size of the fleet, but all appear to agree that there were 320,000 men. This was a mass migration such as the Romans had faced several times in the past when entire Germanic tribes started to move. The sources claim that the Scythian invaders consisted of the Germanic Peuci/Peucini, Goths (Greuthungi, Austrogothi, Tervingi, Visi), Gepidae, Celts (i.e. Bastarnae) and the Heruls.²⁰ The Peucini and Bastarnae would have joined the invaders when their fleet reached the mouth of the Danube. The figure of 320,000 warriors is plausible for this mass of tribes as will be made clear. According to Zosimus, they built 6,000 ships on which they embarked 320,000 men. According to the *HA*, the fleet consisted of 2,000 ships on which were embarked 320,000 men. And, according to Syncellus (AM 5762– 3), the invading force consisted only of the Heruli, who had only 500 ships. The ships consisted presumably of the types employed by the Greek cities of the Black Sea region. It is of note that the *HA* (*Claud.* 6.5–6, 7) also claims that besides the 320,000 armed men, there were also their slaves and families and wagon-trains. The inclusion of the Gepidae, Bastarnae and the wagon trains with families suggest a strong probability that the invading force included a land contingent marching alongside the fleet. It is likely that the slaves would have been mainly used as rowers in the galleys. The slave rowers were naturally not as good in combat as the freeborn Roman professional crews.

The combined barbarian force marched and sailed alongside the western coast of the Black Sea. The combined tribes attacked the walled city of Tomi(s), but were repulsed. The harbour(s) of Tomi(s) was/were probably protected by a squadron of ships. Then they proceeded down the coast to Marcianopolis in Moesia, where their

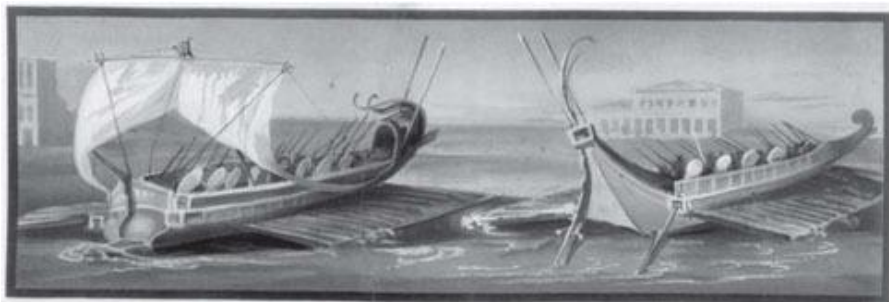
attack again failed possibly because the Byzantine generals defeated them in battle or because the walls were too formidable. They waited for a fair wind and then sailed on to the straits of the Propontis/Bosporus. According to Zosimus, when the barbarian fleet arrived at the straits, the swiftness of the current was too much for the vast number of ships, and some ships sank with crew and all, while other ships ran aground. After this, according to both Zosimus and the *HA*, the Goths moved slowly on from the straits of Propontis and were first repulsed at Byzantium, after which they sailed for Cyzicus, where they were again repulsed. It is probable that it was at Cyzicus or at Byzantium that the *Dux* Venerianus defeated the Goths in a naval battle. The third alternative is that Venerianus engaged the Goths prior to this at the mouth of Propontis when their ships were in disorder. This is less likely because it is certain that the Gothic fleet could have been repulsed from Byzantium and Cyzicus only with naval action (see the maps on pp.xv and 139) and it is these two instances that are mentioned by the sources, which means that there must have been a naval battle somewhere close to Byzantium and also near Cyzicus.

In the naval battle off Byzantium, the Roman fleet would have been deployed between Galata and Byzantium, because the period military harbour was located there behind the 'Severan Wall' and this would have protected the flanks of the outnumbered Roman fleet. It is unfortunate that we do not know who commanded this fleet. Both Cleodemus and Venerianus are possible candidates (see the map at the beginning of the book). It is possible that these naval victories were celebrated on one of the coins struck in Asia in 267, which depicts Neptune holding a trident with his foot on a stern.²¹ The fact that after this the Goths were swept by currents and winds as far as Mt. Athos suggests that the Romans engaged them close to Cyzicus when they were in disorder caused by a storm (see the map of Cyzicus on p.139).²²

What is notable about this Roman naval activity under Gallienus is that these are the first instances of successful naval action against the northern fleets by the Romans: none of the sources mention any naval successes against the northerners to have taken place under Valerian. This means that Gallienus was responsible for the strengthening of the naval forces in the region and it was thanks to his efforts that the Romans were ultimately able to crush the invaders. This would not have been possible without a fleet of sufficient size. It was thanks to

the presence of this fleet that the Romans were able to repulse the Goths from Byzantium and Cyzicus and then harass their naval forces sufficiently so that the Goths chose to try their luck on land. It was also this concentration of naval strength in the Eastern Mediterranean that brought an end to the last remnants of the invading force under Claudius (Zos. 1.44.2), when the Prefect of Egypt, Tenagino Probus, destroyed the remnants of the Herul Fleet in 269. It is clear that Gallienus has not been given his due merit for the strengthening of the naval forces in the Eastern Mediterranean. He did not only strengthen the cavalry arm of the Roman armed forces, but also its naval arm.

The following 19th-century illustration by Nicolini/Niccolini (from 1st century Pompeii) shows some of the typical Roman galleys that would have been used against the invaders. The opinions regarding the classification of these ships vary, but it is quite probable that both are different variants of the *liburnae*-class. Note the ram just below the surface, and the length of the spears. Contrary to popular belief, the Romans never abandoned the use of the long *hastae*-spears, and, again contrary to popular belief, they did employ really long spears (the *kontarion* in the *Strategikon* is c. 3.74 m long) in naval combat, when infantry faced cavalry, and when cavalry fought against cavalry. These were situations in which reach was of the greatest importance.

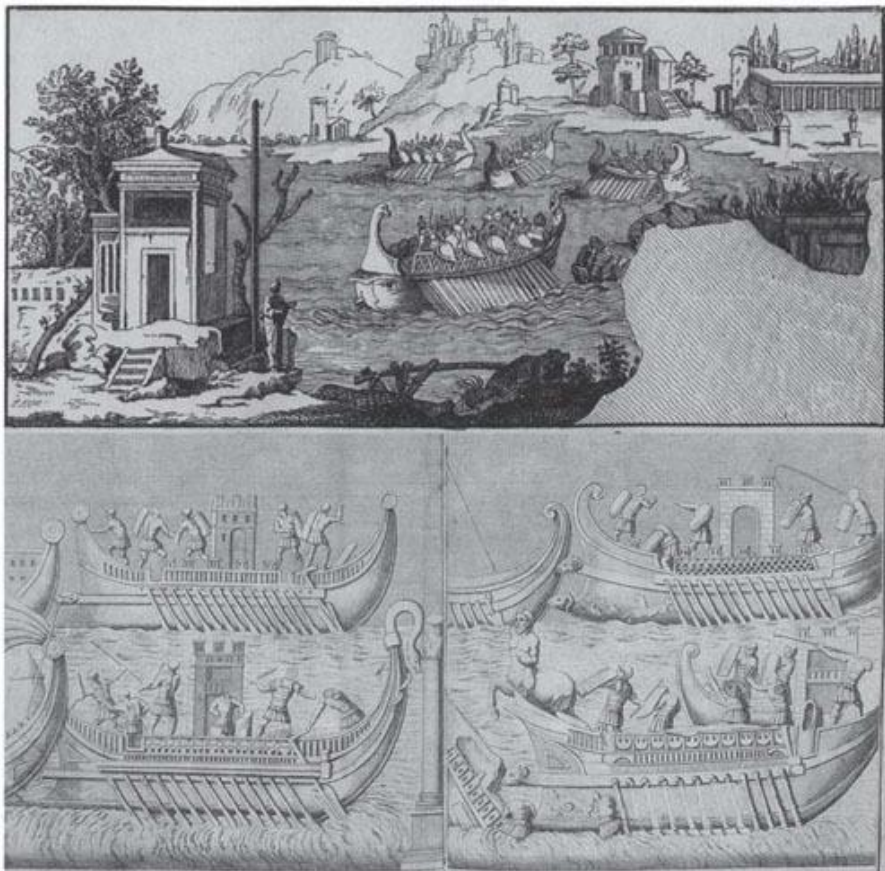


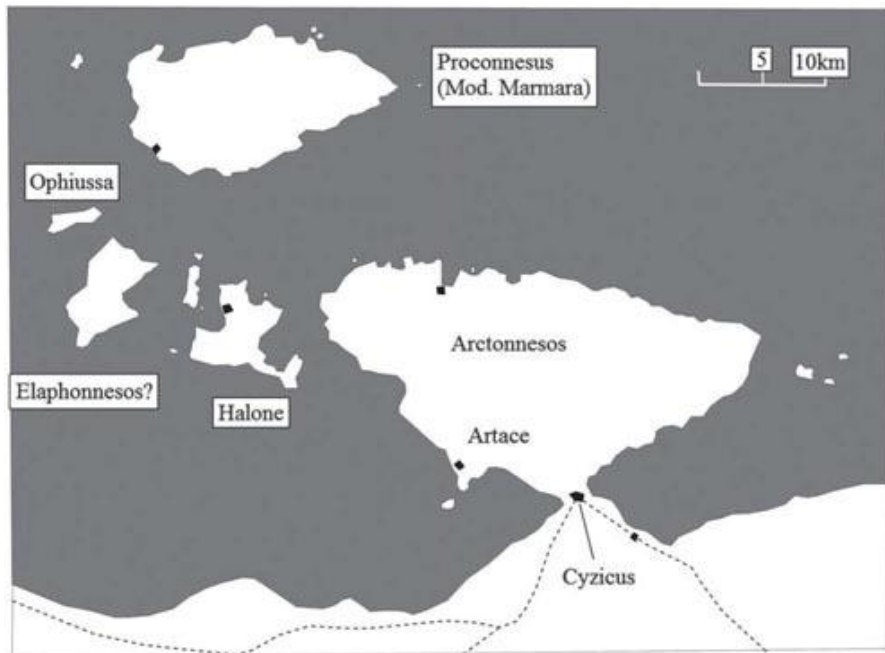
The following images show how the Romans represented naval combat in their art and also shows other examples of Roman ships. Sources: Montfaucon, 18th century, describes a Roman relief of naval combat in Spain; Piranesi, 19th century, describes ships preserved in a mosaic in Herculaneum, 1st century ad. It is probable that the rams are below the waterline in the Herculaneum illustration.

It was at some point in 267 that Gallienus seems to have been stirred into action after he had received the news of the magnitude of the enemy force. It was then that he appointed Aureolus as *dux* of Raetia with his HQ at Milan to protect Italy and Raetia against Postumus. This mistake was later to cost him his life. This suggests

that Gallienus was a bad judge of character. Whatever the reason for Gallienus' forgiveness, Aureolus certainly repaid Gallienus' kindness with utterly despicable treachery. To have been appointed to this post, Aureolus must have proved himself loyal to Gallienus by performing exceptionally well in combat against Postumus.²³

From Cyzicus, the Gothic fleet was swept by currents and winds as far as Mt. Athos, where they repaired their damaged ships. En route the united forces plundered the Island of Lemnos. The above description of events actually proves that Roman tactical victories on land and sea were not complete. One could even say that the Romans suffered a strategic defeat because they were unable to prevent the Gothic fleet from sailing through the straits, but in a situation in which the enemy had overwhelming numerical advantage, the Romans had to settle on fighting a guerrilla campaign.²⁴





It was at the latest at Mt. Athos that the invaders rested for a while and then probably divided the force into two or three separate divisions, or were forced to do so because the wind had separated their fleets. It is actually probable that this separation of forces took place previously at the mouth of the Propontis because the *HA* states so and Syncellus implies the same. Whatever the truth, it is clear that the Goths stayed in the north, while the Heruls sailed towards Attica. It is not certain whether those who sailed to Asia Minor, Rhodes and Cyprus formed a third division. What appears certain is that whatever the strategy of the barbarians had originally been, it did not work as planned, due to the fact that the ships were not truly seaworthy and were manned by unskilled sailors and the Herul fleet got separated. According to Syncellus, the 500 ships of the Heruls ravaged the islands of Lemnos and Skyros/Skiros, but it is possible that the ravaging of the island of Lemnos actually took place when the united fleet was en route to Mt. Athos because it lay on the route, and that the ravaging of Skyros took place only after the Heruls had separated from the main force. However, it is possible that Syncellus is correct after all and that the separation of the fleets took place before so that the Heruls ravaged Lemnos before the main fleet sailed past it.

It is very unfortunate that the sources do not give us enough details for the reconstruction of the likely naval battle near Cyzicus for it had to be a naval battle because the barbarians had to use ships to get

there. On the western approaches the islands and the shape of the Arctonnesos would have enabled the Romans to place their fleet between two land masses (e.g. in the gulf of Cyzicus) or between the islands and would also have enabled them to hide part of their fleet in ambush for example behind some of the islands. The fact that the barbarian invaders possessed numerical superiority would have made it necessary for the Romans to deploy their fleet in this manner. If the barbarian fleet for some reason advanced from the eastern side, then the Romans could have harassed them from behind so that the barbarian ships would have been forced towards the bottom of the gulf from that side. If we assume that the former is the case, as seems likely because the enemy fleet was swept by winds and currents from Cyzicus, then the Romans would probably have deployed their fleet somewhere along the line of islands running from Ophiussa to Elaphonnesos and Halone all the way up to Arctonnesos.

If the Roman fleet was deployed along the entire length, then it would have had roughly about 500-600 ships, but if it was deployed only on one of the straits with an ambush posted behind one of the islands, then it had about 200-300 ships. Both figures are feasible because the Roman Empire certainly possessed enough ships for this. The decisive thing would have been Gallienus' strategy, which we do not know: Did he want to concentrate most of his naval forces in this area or not? He appears to have concentrated most of the naval strength in the area, but at the same time it appears likely that these forces were not assembled together in light of what the sources state (the enemy fleet repulsed separately at Tomi, Byzantium and Cyzicus; the Heruls engaged at Piraeus by the Imperial Fleet; Egyptian Fleet under Tenagino Probus defeated the Heruls in 269). It is also clear that Gallienus did not take both praetorian fleets with him because he needed fleets also in Italy and North Africa to protect these areas against Postumus. In light of the evidence, it is probable that the naval forces in the area of operations consisted of the Ravenna Fleet initially under Venerianus (later under Cleodemus), Black Sea Fleet, Syrian Fleet (it was the Egyptian Fleet which engaged the Heruls in Cyprus in 269) and of such ships as had been built and/or corveed from the Greek coastal cities. The evidence also suggest that these were not grouped together, but deployed separately in the harbours of the coastal cities for their protection so that it is likelier that the principal naval force consisted of the Ravenna Fleet that had been reinforced with detachements drawn from the Black Sea and Syrian fleets and from the local ships. In other words, I would suggest that the figure of

200-300 ships is the likeliest one for the reinforced Imperial Fleet deployed in the area, but one cannot entirely preclude the possibility that the size of the force could have been larger thanks to the possible addition of ships purposefully built for this purpose by the coastal cities.

According to Syncellus, however, after having ravaged these islands, the Heruls sailed to Attica, where they burned Athens. From there they proceeded to the Peloponnesus, where they burned Corinth, Sparta, and Argos and overran all Achaea. It is probable that the Heruls divided their forces when they were in Attica, because one of the Herul chieftains (Naulobatus) surrendered to Gallienus in the north while some other Heruls ravaged the Peloponnesus. My educated guess is that Naulobatus had already separated from the main force of the Heruls when they were in Attica and had advanced from there to Boeotia and Epirus while the rest advanced to the Peloponnesus or stayed in Attica.

By now Gallienus was on the move. His beloved Athens had been burned. He had left Aureolus in charge of the campaign against Postumus in Gaul and Raetia. There are two possible routes that Gallienus may have taken to reach the scene of operations either in the fall of 267 or early in 268, the former being likelier. Firstly, it is possible that the emperor himself, together with Claudius, moved on land with his cavalry towards Thrace. Secondly, it is possible that Gallienus sailed to Dyrrachium and then marched along the Via Egnatia (see below). According to Zonaras (2.26) and many other sources, when the Scythians (i.e. the Heruli) had taken Athens they planned to burn all the books until one of them stated that it would be a mistake because while the Romans were spending their time in reading they neglected military matters. Gallienus also appears to have sent a fleet together with some infantry to assist in the defence of the Peloponnesus and Attica, because in his speech to the Athenian militia Dexippus (fr. 25) claimed that the fleet of the emperor was nearby to support them. It was then that Dexippus ambushed the Heruls in a rough and narrow defile with this 2,000 strong citizen militia of Athens and killed large numbers of the Heruli invaders.

After this, with the help of the fleet under Cleodemus, who had apparently succeeded Venerianus in command of the fleet unless he had already been in command of some parts of it, Dexippus inflicted a crushing defeat on the Heruli at the Piraeus. It is possible that it was this that forced the Heruli to move to the Peloponnesus or that some

of them had already done so (see the map of Athens and Piraeus on page xviii).²⁵ It is not mentioned how the Heruls who advanced to the Peloponnesus were subdued, but my educated guess is that it was the handiwork of the imperial navy. The other alternative is that they were the raiders who then proceeded to Crete where they were subdued through hunger.

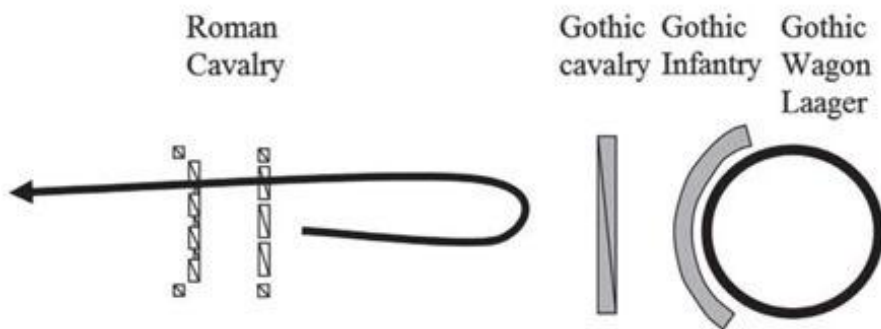
It is also feasible to think that the successful battle against the Goths in Achaea under the leadership of *Dux* Marcianus could be placed on this occasion rather than to the year 261/262, but in my opinion it is inherently likelier that Marcianus actually achieved these successes against the Goths in 261/262 (the enemies in Achaea were now the Heruli and not the Goths) and it was because of this that the Goths were forced to retreat to Asia Minor in 262, as I noted above.²⁶

As regards the main barbarian force, the Goths, after they had refitted their ships at Mt. Athos, proceeded to besiege Cassandra/Kassandreia and Thessalonica. According to Zosimus, they used siege engines and were close to taking the cities, when they learned that the emperor was approaching. It was because of this that they appear to have marched inland towards the emperor and ravaged the country around Doberus/Derroiopos and Pelagonia. There are two possible explanations to this. Firstly, it is possible that the Goths advanced directly to Stobi and from there via Scupi to Naissus against the emperor. Secondly, it is possible that the Goths advanced roughly along the Via Egnatia, but it was here that the garrison at Lychnidus blocked their route. It is possible that the presence of the imperial navy made it preferable for them to attempt to engage the army of Gallienus. The Goths certainly knew that they had better chances on land than on sea. It is unfortunate that we do not know whether Gallienus advanced along the Via Egnatia with relatively small forces, or from the north (via Sirmium, Viminacium, and Naissus towards Scupi and Stobi) with a larger army, or whether the Romans had two separate forces that used both routes. My own educated guess is that it is likelier that Gallienus advanced with his field army from the north via Sirmium and that the Goths advanced directly towards him in the expectation that they could defeat him in the same manner as they had Decius. Zosimus' account suggests that the Goths were surprised somewhere near Derroiopos and Pelagonia by the Dalmatian cavalry and lost 3,000 men. This would suggest that Gallienus did indeed use the northern route, but this is not conclusive because it is possible that he had shadowed the Goths from Pelagonia when they moved

northwards. On this occasion the Dalmatian cavalry must have acted as a vanguard for the rest of the army.²⁷

Following this, the remnants of the tribal armies then engaged the main army of Gallienus somewhere close to Naissus. According to Zosimus, even though many fell on both sides in the Battle of Naissus and the Romans were 'defeated', the emperor was still able to ambush the barbarians on lonely roads and kill 50,000 of them. These details allow two possible reconstructions. Firstly, it is possible that the Roman cavalry charged against the Goths and then forced them to seek shelter in their wagon laager, with the result that the Romans were defeated and had to seek shelter from their own infantry and marching camp. This would mean that the ambushes on the lonely roads took place during the subsequent shadowing of the enemy. The second and the likeliest alternative, however, is that the Romans' first cavalry line or the entire cavalry force feigned flight and lured the Gothic cavalry to pursue them to the lonely roads where they had placed ambushes, with the result that the Goths suffered a horrible defeat with 50,000 men lost.

The Battle of Naissus in 267 **The Likely Battle Formations**



The likely stages of the Battle of Naissus in 267:

1) Roman cavalry attacks and fights for a while and then performs a feigned flight. My educated guess is that Gallienus would have used the regular array so that the enemy would not have suspected the placing of ambush somewhere in the rear.

2) Gothic cavalry pursues and is led to prepared ambushes where they lose 50,000 men. The area around Naissus is full of places ideal for the placing of ambush, which is the reason why I have not attempted to pinpoint the exact place. Some of these are actually such that these

could have been particularly useful for the use of infantry and my educated guess is that the Roman cavalry scattered purposefully to make the flight believable and also that the enemy could be led to the restricted terrain where the infantry was particularly useful.

The ‘Scythians’ who had survived the Battle of Naissus used their carts for protection and moved on to Macedonia. Gallienus’ defensive system based on fortified cities showed its value now. It worked perfectly. The Roman cavalry shadowed the *carrago*. In consequence, the Goths could not obtain any provisions and began to suffer from hunger. Both men and animals were dying in droves. Then the Roman cavalry confronted them frontally somewhere on the road near the main mountain range of Thrace and forced them to retreat, and then forced the Goths to take refuge on the mountain Mons Haemus/Mount Gessaces. The Romans cut off their route of retreat by surrounding them in their mountain shelter.

In sum, on the basis of the above accounts, Gallienus appears to have inflicted a crushing defeat on the Goths in the Battle of Naissus, but this defeat did not end the war because most of the Goths had survived in their wagon laager. During the subsequent pursuit the Romans were naturally able to inflict even more casualties because of the lack of training in combined operations between the separate tribes, plus the sheer length of the *carrago* would have enabled Gallienus to destroy parts of the moving wagon lines piecemeal. It would have been a simple manoeuvre for him to attack the rear of the convoy and bring it to a halt with a combination of archery, javelins and close-quarters combat, so that there would appear intervals in the lengthy columns of wagons thanks to the fact that some wagons would have still been moving forward while others had already been halted to face the attack of the Roman cavalry. After that Gallienus would have simply attacked the exposed sections while keeping other cavalry in reserve to prevent any relief attempts by the tribes advancing ahead. It was even easier for the Roman cavalry to ambush the foragers that the Goths were forced to send out to seek provisions. The successful guerrilla campaign forced the Goths to retreat so that they were finally forced to take refuge on Mt. Haemus.

It is probably in this context that we should see Syncellus’s claim (AM 5748) that Gallienus defeated 3,000 Heruls near Nessos – in truth these would have been the Goths. Nessos has variously been identified with the battle of Naissus, or with the river Nestus/Nestos, which divides Macedonia from Thrace, or with the battle fought by the

Dalmatian cavalry against the Goths in which 3,000 enemies fell according to Zosimus (1.41–43.2) during the reign of Claudius. The sequence of military action (i.e. the so-called military probability) makes it very probable that these resemblances are superficial (even if it is still clear that the sources have confused the battles) and that a separate battle was also fought on the river Nestos/Nestus during the phase in which the Goths attempted to retreat from Gallienus' army. This river is in Macedonia and clearly on the route of retreat away from Naissus towards the south-east and east. It is therefore quite probable that it was partly thanks to this battle by the river Nestos that the Goths were forced to continue their march towards the northern border where the Haemus Range was. It is unfortunate that we do not know whether Gallienus had bypassed the Goths after the city of Amphipolis and had assumed a position behind the river Nestus, or whether he attacked the Goths from behind when they were in the process of crossing the river.²⁸ In light of the location where we find the Goths next – the Haemus Range – it is likelier that Gallienus attacked the Goths when they were crossing the river and that the Goths then marched past Hadrianopolis towards the Haemus while Gallienus shadowed them.

When the enemy had been forced to seek a place of refuge on the Mount Haemus there was a disagreement between the cavalry and infantry over who should engage the barbarians, and the emperor decided that the latter should. It would have been utterly impracticable to attack a well-fortified wagon laager on a mountain with cavalry.²⁹ However, the Roman infantry was defeated in a fierce battle in front of the wagon laager. It was only the timely arrival of the cavalry that saved the Romans from further disaster. It is unfortunate that we do not know what battle formation the infantry adopted for its attack, but considering the use of the cavalry as a reserve force, the likeliest is actually a single phalanx. It is also very unfortunate that we do not know the strength of the infantry force attacking the Goths beyond the likelihood that it must have consisted of at least 30,000–40,000 men for it to be effective while still being so small as to suffer a defeat.

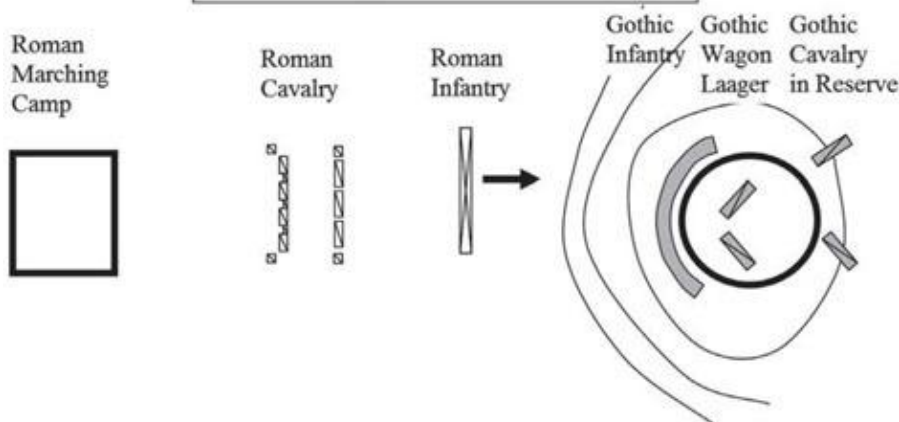
On the basis of information provided by the *HA*, it is probable that the Roman cavalry which helped the retreating Roman infantry and forced the Goths back to their wagon laager then committed the unforgivable blunder of starting to plunder the enemy camp. The *HA* (*Claud.* 11.3–9, *Aur.* 17.2. 18.1) describes an event that took place

when the surviving Goths had gathered in Haemimontum (i.e. on Mt. Haemus) and were suffering from famine and pestilence as a result of which Claudius (clearly still as Gallienus' general) is said to have 'scorned to conquer them any further'. In the words of the *HA* (*Claud.* 11.6), 'the victory was complete', but then a number of Claudius' soldiers who were overblown with success started to plunder, with the result that 2,000 of them were killed. It is probable that this was the occasion on which the '*magistri* of the cavalry' acted rashly and it is possible that this incident allowed at least some of the Goths to break through the cordon around them. When Claudius learned of this, he is said to have assembled his army, seized the disobeying soldiers, meted out punishment and sent the worst offenders to Rome to be used in public spectacles in the arena. This would fit the circumstances in which the Roman infantry had just been defeated and saved by the cavalry with the result that some of them, despite being ordered to halt, had managed to penetrate the enemy camp. However, this is a mere conjecture of mine.

When discussing the events that follow, one should keep in mind that it is probable that the well-motivated Illyrian/Dalmatian cavalry that had performed particularly well during this campaign was angry at being taken away at a time when the Goths were still roving about close to their homes. It is possible that the Illyrian Claudius was one of those who felt that Gallienus should have stayed in Illyria-Thrace to finish the war. It should be noted, however, that it is possible that Claudius had ordered the foolish cavalry attack up to the camp and was therefore the main culprit in the disaster and that this was covered up by the sources. In fact, according to the *HA* (*Aur.* 18.1), Aurelian had been appointed to the post of commander of all cavalry (i.e. as *Hipparchos/Magister Equitum* or as *Comes Domesticorum Equitum*) after the *magistri* (masters/leaders) of the horse had attacked without the emperor's orders. Could it be that Gallienus had demoted Claudius as a result of the above failure? This appears very unlikely because Claudius actually appears to have saved the situation and Gallienus also seems to have promoted Claudius because at the time of Gallienus' murder Claudius was commanding the garrison of Ticinum/Pavia (see the Map of Milan on page 95) as *tribunus* (Aurelius Victor 33.28), which I interpret to mean *Tribunus et Magister Officiorum*, who was in charge of the imperial administration and who was also probably the overall commander of the *Protectores/Scholae* and therefore superior to both Aurelian and Marcianus: i.e. Gallienus clearly held Claudius in very high esteem and rewarded him for the

great services he had performed.

The Battle of Mount Haemus in 267 The Likely Battle Formations



The likely stages of the Battle of Mount Haemus/Gessaces in 267 or 268:

(The exact location of the battle is unknown and the map should therefore be seen as conjectural)

1) Roman infantry attacks, but is defeated by the Goths. The exact infantry formation is unknown, but on the basis of the use of the cavalry as a reserve the single phalanx is the likeliest. It is probable that if the Goths had placed cavalry in the front initially that it was withdrawn behind the infantry before the battle began. The Goths may have attacked the Roman infantry in the flank with cavalry in the same manner as they were later to do in the famous battle of Adrianople in 378.

2) The Goths start to pursue the retreating infantry, which appears to have been done in a disorderly manner because the counter attack by the Roman cavalry was so successful that some of the Romans managed to penetrate into the Gothic wagon laager.

3) The Roman cavalry became disordered when it started to plunder the enemy camp with the result that the regrouped Goths came close to destroying it.

Syncellus (AM 5748) also mentions that at some point in time Naulabatos, the Heruli chieftain, unconditionally surrendered to the emperor Gallienus, who then honoured him with the rank of consul. Hunger could bring about an amazing change of heart. However, the honouring of a barbarian who had just ravaged the Balkans must have angered many of the Illyrian generals who could not comprehend such

a course of action. They themselves were full-blooded Romans who had fought loyally for years and most of them had not received a consulship and then Gallienus rewarded a barbarian with the rank of consul after this very same man had just ravaged Roman territory! On top of it all, the Heruls practised pederasty and even molested asses.³⁰ As noted above, it is probable that Naulobatus had separated from the rest of the Heruls. The timing of the surrender of Naulobatus is problematic, but it appears likely that he was forced to surrender either before the Goths advanced to Pelagonia and Derroiopos (with the intention of joining their forces) or that he was defeated by a detachment of the same army that had encountered the Goths in those two areas.



THE GREAT GOTHIC INVASION OF THE YEARS 267-269 (SEE THE MAP)

The united barbarian forces from the mouth of the Dnieper up to the Propontis

- 1) Mouth of the Dnieper
- 2) Mouth of the Danube where the Peucini and Bastarnae join them.
- 3) City of Tomi. The attack is repulsed possibly by the Byzantine *duces*

4) City of Marcianopolis. The attack is repulsed possibly by the Byzantine *duces* .

5) Mouth of the Propontis to Byzantium. The fleet is scattered in a storm. It is possible that Venerianus engaged the enemy fleet when it was facing a storm as this was one of the standard naval tactics followed up by the Romans and Byzantines (Syvanne, a research paper presented at Annapolis Naval Academy in 2015) or that he defeated a part of the enemy fleet when it was in front of Byzantium.

The Goths from the mouth of Propontis onwards:

A) Cyzicus. The Gothic attack is repulsed possibly by Venerianus' fleet.

B) Mt. Athos (forces regrouped)

C) Kassandreai besieged

D) Thessalonica besieged

E) Both of the above sieges were abandoned when the news of the imminent arrival of the emperor was brought to the Goths with the result that they advanced to Pelagonia and Derroiopos. It is not known with certainty what routes Gallienus's forces took to the theatre of operations, but it is possible or even probable that some of those were sent on ships to Dyrrachium from where they advanced against both the Heruls (see below) and Goths. It is also probable that Gallienus assembled forces from different areas to the Balkans, and that at least part of these forces would have advanced from Italy and garrisons of the Balkans to the theatre of operations. The Dalmatian cavalry ambushes the Goths and inflicts 3,000 casualties. The Gothic advance is blocked by the Romans at the latest at Lynchidus.

F) Gallienus defeats the Goths decisively at the battle of Naissus by using the feigned flight and ambushes on lonely roads so that 50,000 Goths are killed. The surviving Goths retreat into the direction desired by Gallienus.

G) Gallienus defeats the Goths by the river Nestos/Nestus at the border of Macedonia and Thrace and force them northwards towards the Haemus Range.

H) The Goths are probably defeated in battle again somewhere close to the Haemus mountain range with the result that they are forced to seek a place of refuge in the mountains. The Gothic force is scattered when they manage to fight their way out.

The Heruls from the mouth of the Propontis onwards:

a) The Heruls who have become separated from the Goths at the

mouth of the Propontis pillage the island of Lemno.

b) The Heruls pillage the island of Skyros.

c) The Heruls pillage Athens but are ambushed by Dexippus while ravaging Attica, and those Heruls who are at Piraeus are destroyed by Cleodemus' fleet. It is probable that the Heruls divide their forces in Attica so that Naulobatus advances to Boeotia and Epirus while the rest advance towards Peloponnesus. It is this division of forces that enables Dexippus to destroy one of the invading columns.

d) The Heruls sack Corinth.

e) The Heruls sack Argos.

f) The Heruls sack Sparta.

g) Naulobatus ravages Boeotia.

h) Naulobatus pillages Epirus, but is then cornered by Gallienus' forces so that hunger forces them to surrender. Gallienus's forces may have been previously landed at Dyrrachium from which one part had advanced against the Goths in Pelagonia and Derroiopos, and another part against Naulobatus.

i) Some barbarian force (presumably the Heruls who had pillaged Peloponnesus) attack Crete probably in about 268, but were defeated by disease which may have resulted from the action taken by the Imperial Fleet and then probably finally by the fleet of Probus in 269 (HA Claud. 12; Zos. 1.44).

The Third 'Scythian' Force?

j) The 'third' Scythian force apparently sailed along the coast of Asia Minor, and raided Rhodes en route to Side and Cyprus.

k) It is probable that the unsuccessful siege of Side by the 'Scythians', which is mentioned by Dexippus (Scythica fr.27; Müller 651ff.), took place during the reign of Gallienus possibly before the raiding of Cyprus or roughly at the same time. It is probable that the Imperial Fleet had a role in forcing the Scythians away from Side.

l) Some barbarians attacked Cyprus probably in about 268. It is probable that they were isolated and subjected to a famine by the Imperial Fleet dispatched by Gallienus, but so that their remnants were forced to surrender only to the Tenagino Probus in 269 (HA Claud. 12, Zos.1.44).

Gallicienus in person vs. Goths in 267-268

(This is clearly a single campaign and not a campaign that took place under two emperors with one to two years in between)

1) The Goths learn of the approach of the imperial army and the fleet when they are besieging Thessalonica. It is probable that Gallicienus advances via Aquilae to Sirmium and from there to Naissus with the intention of relieving the besieged city.

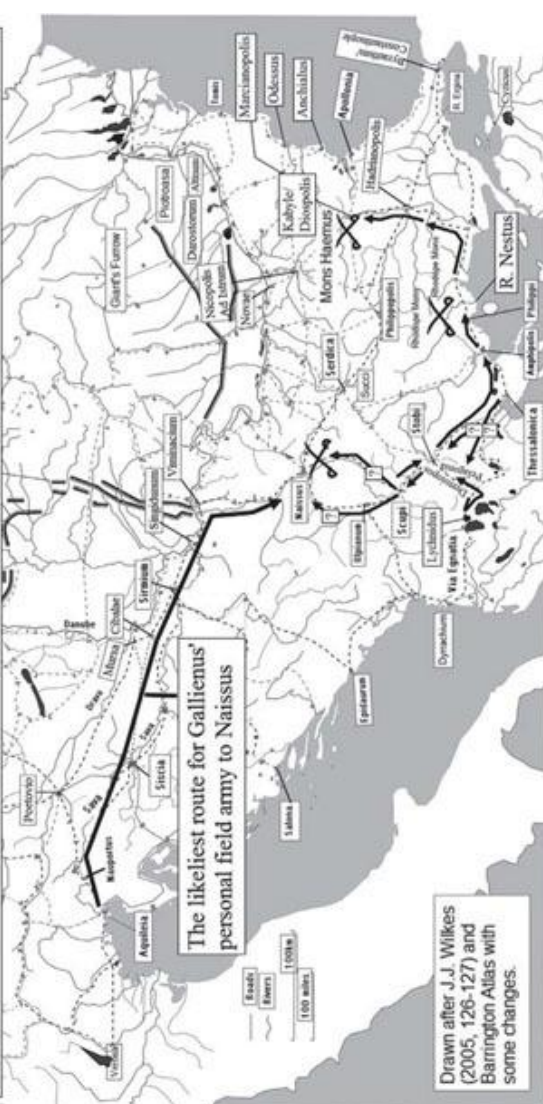
2) The Goths abandon their siege and ships with the intention of engaging the emperor on land. They advance to Pelagonia and Derrioiopos. This leaves open two possibilities. It is possible that the Goths first tried to advance towards the city of Dyrrachium but were then forced to abandon that attempt by the presence of the garrison at Lychindus. The second alternative is that they advanced directly to Stobi and then northwards up to Scupi. There they had two alternative routes to Naissus and it is not known which one they took.

3) Gallicienus engaged the Goths in combat at Naissus and forced them to retreat back to Thessalonica and from there eastwards. It is probable that the Imperial Navy or the defenders of Thessalonica had destroyed the beached Gothic ships by then if the Goths had not burned those themselves when they abandoned the siege. Gallicienus's cavalry inflict a horrible number of casualties to the retreating Gothic forces and then engage them again at the crossing of the River Nestus/Nestos. The Goths are forced to march north towards the Haemus Range. 4) The sources do not tell us what route the Romans or the Goths took, but it is probable that the Goths retreated past Hadrianopolis/Adrianople and that the Romans forced the Goths to seek shelter from the mountain Gessaces/Haemimontus somewhere close to the city of Kabyle/Diospolis where there are isolated hills both to the north and east of the city. It is there that Gallicienus' forces engaged the Goths for the last time before the news of the revolt of Aureolus forced Gallicienus to abandon his campaign. It was this that enabled the Goths to break free from the stranglehold into which they had been put.

The Campaign under Marcianus and Aurelian 268-270

1) The veteran commander Marcianus was successful in his campaign during the years 268-269 so that we hear of no setbacks which means that he managed to isolate and keep at bay the Gothic forces in the Haemus Range.

2) When Aurelian succeeded Marcianus as commander, he conducted the campaign in so lacklustre manner that Claudius was forced to order Aurelian to act with greater diligence. It is probable that Aurelian's main motivation was to keep his army intact for a possible attempt on the throne. It was probably this that enabled the Goths to advance against Nicopolis ad Istrum and Anchialus.



Drawn after J.J. Wilkes (2005, 126-127) and Barrington Atlas with some changes.

The third group of 'Scythians' may have sailed along the coast of Asia Minor looting and pillaging as they went, if these were not the group that had advanced to Peloponnesus – it is entirely plausible that they could have been that group because it is quite possible that they would have sailed on in 268 after they had already sacked the Peloponnesus in 267. There exists a fragment of Dexippus (*Scythica* fr.27; Müller 651ff.), which refers to a siege of Side by Scythians and it is clear that this took place at this time (see the Map of Side on page xix). According to the fragment, the city possessed abundant supplies so that the enemy was forced to assault it. The attackers built siege-engines and siege towers, but the defenders responded in kind with effective defensive fire and with improvised defences so that the

enemy was forced to give up their attempt. Notably, there exist two types of coins minted at Side during the reign of Gallienus, which are undated, but which have galleys on the reverse with the text *sidêtôn neôkorôn* or *sidêtôn neôkorôn nauarchis* (see above). This makes it likely that the above-mentioned siege took place during Gallienus' reign and that his fleet may have had a role in its defeat. Whatever the truth, the remnants of these forces and of those who raided Cyprus appear to have been forced to surrender by Tenagino Probus in 269.

After the battle of Mt. Haemus, Gallienus' strategy appears to have been to force the Goths to submit through famine, but it was not fated that Gallienus would finish his war against the invading Goths which he had begun so successfully. Aureolus had revolted and was advancing on Rome. Consequently, Gallienus left Marcianus in charge of the war against the Goths in the Mt. Haemus range with a combined/joint force, while Gallienus himself together with his elite cavalry hastened back to Italy.



Two undated coins minted at Side implying that Gallienus had achieved a naval victory. It is quite possible that this referred to the time when the city was besieged by the 'Scythians'. The other alternative is that these celebrated the victories achieved by Gallienus' admirals prior to this and which were possibly also celebrated in the coins minted at Milan (Fortuna with rudder) dated by Wildwinds to the year 266 and the coins minted at Antioch (with Neptunus placing the right foot on a prow) which de Blois (108) dates to the year 267.

Left: Gallienus, slightly worn out coin minted at Side, drawing slightly simplified to ease the drawing. Front: *aut kai Pou Li Egn Galliênos Seba*, radiate bust. Reverse: *Sidêtôn ae neôkorôn*, galley with five rowers and a pomegranate tree.

Right: Gallienus, slightly worn out coin minted at Side, drawing slightly simplified to ease the drawing. Front: *aut kai Pou Li Egn Galliêno Seba* (a variant of this coin has: *auto kai Pou Li Egn Galliêno Seba*), radiate bust Reverse: *Sidêtôn neôkorôn nauarchis*, galley with sail and five rowers.

Marcianus had previously served as *Dux* in Achaea, but thanks to

his services he was now promoted to either *Magister Peditum* or *Comes Domesticorum Peditum* (or *Comes Peditum*) or he may already have been promoted to these positions thanks to his great services, for example in 262. The best proof of this is Inscription AE 1965, 114 Philippolis in Thrace: ‘*ho diasêmotatos, protector tou aneikêtou despotou hêmôn Galliênou Se(bastou), tribounos praetôrianôn kai doux kai stratêlatês*’.³¹ Since the text details his career as: *protector* of the emperor Gallienus, *tribunus* of the Praetorians, *doux* and general (*stratêlates*), it is clear that Marcianus had been promoted from the position of *doux* to that of general. During the sixth century the *stratêlates* usually signified a *magister militum*, but could also mean *Comes Excubitorum* or *Comes Foederatum* (new offices created in the fifth century, but often held by the same person in the sixth century). If one takes this back to a third-century context, the likeliest alternatives are the above mentioned *Magister Peditum* or *Comes Domesticorum Peditum*.

7.5 Aureolus’ Revolt and Gallienus’ Swift Response in 268

As noted above, Aureolus, the commander of the Raetian army, again revolted against Gallienus and changed his allegiance to Postumus in 268. As a result, Postumus could now concentrate his full effort against Laelianus, who had in the meanwhile revolted, while Aureolus acted to secure Italy against Gallienus. Aureolus appears to have transferred soldiers from Raetia into Italy with Milan serving as their assembly point, with predictable results when this was noted by the Alamanni. Aureolus’ aim also appears to have been to secure the city of Rome for Postumus, but the conspirators did not take into account the speed of Gallienus’ response. Once again Gallienus’ alacrity paid off. He reached the environs of Milan in time to prevent any additional moves by Aureolus. Aureolus took a defensive position behind the Adda River close to the bridge of Pontirolo. This suggests the probability that Aureolus did not possess as good cavalry as Gallienus and that Aureolus feared the effects of the charge of Gallienus’ elite *equites* – and not without a reason, as Gallienus defeated Aureolus at the battle of the bridge Pontirolo (see the Map of Milan on page 95). We do not know any details, but if this battle resembles the battles in which the Gothic lancers defeated their enemies who had taken defensive positions across the river, then it is possible that Gallienus’ cavalry charged similarly straight on across the river and crushed the enemy in hand-to-hand combat – but this is only my speculation. Aureolus was forced to seek refuge inside Milan and Gallienus set about besieging the city, with Claudius being placed

in charge of the siege-works south-east and south of the city with his headquarters at Ticinum. According to Aurelius Victor (33.28), Claudius had the rank of tribune, which I interpret to mean *Tribunus et Magister Officiorum*, i.e. the man in charge of the imperial administration and all of the *Protectores* bodyguards.

According to Zonaras (2.25), in the course of the siege the enemy noted that Gallienus was in the habit of leaving too few soldiers behind in the camp to protect his wife while he was attacking them. They tried to exploit this by attacking the camp when the emperor was fighting against them elsewhere. Their plan was to capture Salonina, the emperor's wife, presumably for the purpose of using her as a hostage. But luckily for her there was a soldier in front of her tent who was adjusting his sandal just when the enemy appeared. He grasped a shield and dagger, killed two, and held the other attackers in check until help arrived.³²

7.6 The Conspiracy of the Marshals (August/September ad 268)

33

There are three basic versions of the conspiracy and assassination of Gallienus and several variant versions of these. This is by no means surprising: the confusion surrounding the assassination of John F. Kennedy shows that when the truth is not fully known there will be a plethora of different conspiracy theories. In this case the three basic variants are: 1) the future emperor Claudius was unaware of the plot to kill Gallienus and was appointed by him to be his successor before his death; 2) the death of Gallienus resulted from the skilful ruse of Aureolus, who dropped a falsified letter indicating that Gallienus intended to execute certain officers; or 3) and the most likely version, which is that Claudius was the *primus motor* behind the assassination. There are also two basic variants for the way in which the murder took place: 1) Gallienus was killed in his tent; or 2) Gallienus was lured away from his tent and bodyguards and then killed.

In one version given by Zonaras (12.25) and in the most commonly-accepted reading of Aurelius Victor (33.21), Aurelian was the chief conspirator. According to Zonaras' first version, the mighty men of the state wanted to kill Gallienus with the help of Aurelian (Aurelianus), the commander of horsemen, who went to meet the emperor, but it is possible that Zonaras has in this case confused Aureolus and Aurelianus. As noted by Cizek, this would mean that Ceronius/Cecropius (see later), the commander of the Dalmatian

cavalry, would have served under Aurelian. The plotters planned to kill Gallienus only after Aureolus had been dealt with, but when they learned that their conspiracy had been discovered they decided to kill Gallienus immediately. This version would fit Aurelius Victor's version in which Aureolus resorted to a ruse in which he wrote a false list of officers that Gallienus supposedly intended to kill. It was then thanks to the renewed urgency to kill Gallienus that Aurelian's horsemen brought a false report of the impending approach of Aureolus to Gallienus while it was close to mealtime. According to Zonaras, Gallienus mounted his horse hastily and rode off. A troop of horse blocked his route and Gallienus asked what they wanted. Their answer was that they wanted to remove him from office. Gallienus tried to flee. Thanks to the speed of his horse he almost got away, but then his horse balked at the edge of a stream with the result that the pursuers caught up with him. One of the pursuers threw a spear at him (Cecropius?), and he fell from his horse and then died from loss of blood.

According to Aurelius Victor (33.21), the reason for Aurelian's (in the variant text 'Herculianus', who is presumably Heraclianus) participation was that Aureolus had forged a list of *duces* and tribunes due to be executed and that this list was then thrown from the wall secretly for the besiegers to read. Aurelian, who was highly respected by the soldiers, then formed a plan to murder Gallienus, which the other men accepted. Aurelian's cavalry then faked an enemy attack in the middle of the night and led Gallienus out of his tent during the night and one unknown assassin threw a spear that wounded the emperor mortally. The killer was not punished because his name was not known and because it had served the common good. When Gallienus then realized that his end was near thanks to the loss of blood, he dispatched the imperial insignia to Claudius.

The problematic thing about Aurelius Victor's account is the reading of the name of the chief conspirator, because we know from other sources that Herculanus, which is likely to be a misreading of Heraclianus, was definitely among the chief plotters. On the other hand, we have the accounts of the *HA* (e.g. *Aur.* 6, 7, 8, 36, 39, 46, 49) and Lactantius (6) describing Aurelian as a lowly-born conservative person who was a stern disciplinarian with savage instincts – and we have no reason to doubt this account. The key parts of the *Augustan History's* account are: 1) the referrals to the potential for conflict between the harsh Aurelian and the frivolous, merry-

making Gallienus in the probably fictitious letter of Valerian (*HA Aur.* 8); 2) the referrals to the punishment of adultery with death by Aurelian when one of his soldiers committed adultery with the wife of his host (*Aur.* 7.3–4) and when one of his maidservants had slept with a fellow-slave (9.4–5), and we should not forget that Gallienus was a man who celebrated his adulterous lifestyle in full public view; and 3) the order not to keep free-born women as concubines, as had notably been done by Gallienus (*HA Aur.* 49.8). It is unlikely to be a coincidence that the *HA* does not contain any fictitious letter to Aurelian similar to the one giving Claudius two slave woman for his personal use. Aurelian apparently did not accept adultery in any form or manner. On top of that, and in great contrast to Gallienus, Aurelian appears to have been so hostile towards Christianity that he was on the point of launching another persecution of Christians just before he was murdered (Eusebius *EH* 7.30.20ff.; Lactantius 6).

All of these things point to the probability that Aurelian had indeed been the prime mover in the plot thanks to the fact that he disliked intensely the gender-bending frivolous upper-class lifestyle of Gallienus and also his religious policies, but it does not say anything about the role of the other high-ranking men in the plot. In light of this it would be possible to think that Claudius had indeed been unaware of the plot and that his apologists would be correct. The problem with this is that it sounds too good to be true. It is likelier that all of the high-ranking officers were party to the plot, but obviously one cannot be absolutely certain about this.

It is also of note that when a report of an enemy attack was brought to Gallienus, he mounted a horse and rode off in the direction of the attack. This is in great contrast to earlier times, when it was far more typical for commanders like Julius Caesar to seek the closest legion and then lead it forward towards the attack. It is quite obvious that cavalry was now the principal arm of service and that Gallienus always sought to use its speed to the best effect. After all, the cavalry could always be dismounted to fight as infantry if need be.

Let us now turn to the other versions preserved in the sources. According to the *HA* (*Gall.* 14), the Praetorian prefect Heraclianus and Marcianus were the men who formed the plan to kill Gallienus. They took the commander of the Dalmatian cavalry Ceronius/Cecropius in their trust. Marcianus and Cecropius sent word to Gallienus that Aureolus was now fast approaching. Gallienus gathered his soldiers and went forth as if to battle, but was then slain by the assassins. The

assassin who pierced Gallienus with a spear was Cecropius. After the death of Gallienus, the soldiers were in a state of mutiny, with the result that the officers held a council, Marcianus bribed the men with money and Claudius was chosen as emperor. Valerian, the brother of Gallienus, was also killed at the same time. It is easy to show that this version is probably false. At this time Marcianus was in the Balkans – or at least the sources do not mention his return to Italy.

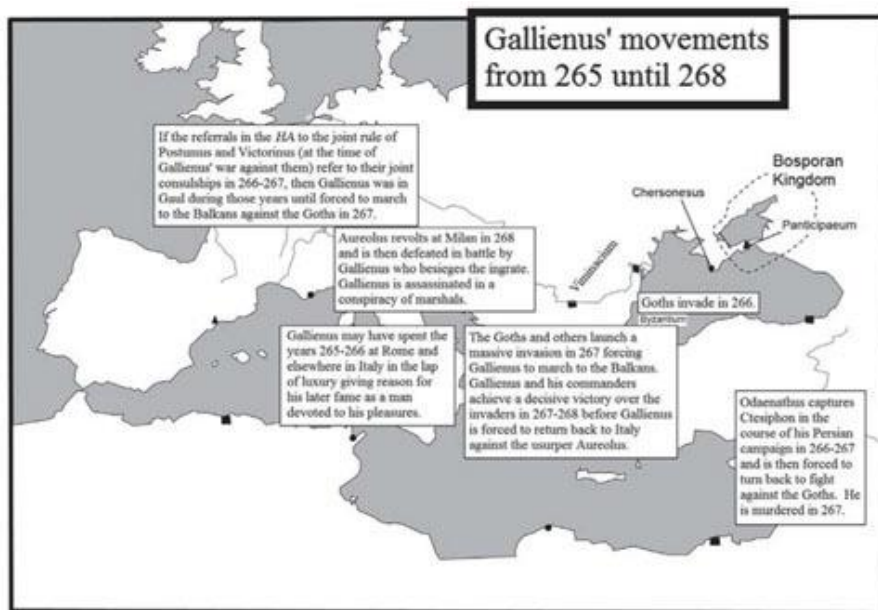
One can therefore detect in the Latin sources a likely attempt to try to exonerate Claudius from the blame for the killing. There are basically two reasons for this. Firstly, the sources follow the senatorial sources that were very partial towards their favourite Claudius. Secondly, these sources tried to portray Constantine I the Great's supposed ancestor in the best possible light.

Notably, in all of the abovementioned versions, after the spear had been thrown at Gallienus, the men closest to Gallienus were his killers and were in possession of the imperial regalia of Gallienus that was then given to Claudius. In other words, it is likely that the whole story of Gallienus sending the imperial regalia to Claudius was concocted by Claudius and his co-conspirators.

Let us now detail the versions that put the blame on Claudius. According to Zosimus (1.40–41), the praetorian prefect Heraclianus and Claudius plotted to kill Gallienus. They entrusted the task to the commander of the Dalmatian cavalry (i.e. Cecropius), who then declared to Gallienus who was at dinner that a scout had brought a report that Aureolus was approaching. Gallienus took his arms and mounted his horse and rode off without waiting for his bodyguards. The commander of the Dalmatian cavalry then killed him.

According to a second version given by Zonaras, the plotters were Heraclianus and Claudius. When Gallienus was woken up with the news that Aureolus was attacking, Heraclianus struck him when he jumped off his bed. According to John of Antioch's version (f.232/f.152.3), the commander of the Dalmatian cavalry Heraclianus killed Gallienus at dinner while Claudius was present. This clearly combines two different men into the same account, the commander of the Dalmatian cavalry Cecropius and the praetorian prefect Heraclianus. According to the *Synopsis Chronike* (p.38), the conspirators were Heraclianus and Claudius, and it was Heraclianus who awoke Gallienus and claimed that Aureolus was attacking, and then killed Gallienus when he was attempting to find his arms. In short, most of the Greek sources seem to lay the blame squarely on Claudius.

Zosimus, who was hostile towards Constantine, and hence his supposed ancestor, had no reason to cover up the treachery of Claudius. And what would have been the principal motivation of Claudius and the other officers to kill Gallienus? In my opinion the speech of Claudius in Zonaras 2.26 gives us the answer. According to Zonaras, when the officers discussed what should be done in a situation in which Gaul was still in the hands of Postumus and the barbarians had crossed into Europe and Asia, Claudius answered that the war against the usurper was his concern, but the war against the barbarians was the state's concern and that the state's interest should be given precedence. This means that the Illyrian officers were primarily angry because Gallienus had marched against Aureolus in a situation in which the Goths and Heruls were still roaming in the Balkans.



In sum, it is practically certain that Claudius, Heraclianus and Cecropius were the principal plotters. The role of others is less certain. This concerns in particular Marcianus, because it is practically certain that Marcianus was not party to the plot because he was in the Balkans, or if he was involved, then he must have taken a great risk because communication would have required the exchange of messages that could have been intercepted, or maybe the conspiracy was already formed when all generals were still in the Balkans or Marcianus was visiting Gallienus at the time when his own men were conducting mopping up operations in the Balkans.

The role of Heraclianus must have been decisive in the plot because as a praetorian prefect he was in charge of intelligence gathering and of the personal safety of the emperor.³⁴ It is also likely that events probably unfolded as described by Zosimus and Zonaras (the first version), but one cannot entirely rule out the possibility that Gallienus was murdered in his tent by Heraclianus and Cecropius. According to the likelier version, the conspirators first separated Gallienus from his bodyguards and then killed him, following this up with the concocted story according to which Gallienus had sent the imperial regalia to Claudius. Both Heraclianus and Claudius were conveniently elsewhere when the actual murder occurred in this version of events. However, the plotters failed to comprehend the love the soldiers felt towards their emperor. The conspirators were at pains to represent Claudius as being innocent of the plot to murder Gallienus. They claimed that Gallienus had chosen Claudius as his successor and in order to make their claims carry more weight they also bribed the soldiers with a plentiful donative.

The sources differ on what happened to the relatives of Gallienus after his murder. His brother Valerian was probably killed in the camp, but it was also claimed that Gallienus was killed with his sons Licinius (possibly a mistake for his brother) and Saloninus (clearly a mistake, possibly meaning Salonina) at Milan (i.e. during the siege of Milan). According to Aurelius Victor, when the Roman population and senators learned that Gallienus was dead, they decreed that his relatives and friends were to be thrown down the Gemonian stairs. Victor also claims that more would have been killed if Claudius, after the capture of Milan, had not given orders to spare those who had survived because the army had demanded it. The new emperor was the darling of the conservative elements within the Senate, but he still had to take into account the soldiers and their wishes. It is likely that Claudius had instigated through his supporters the massacre of Gallienus' relatives, friends and supporters in Rome by the mob with the help of the Senate, but then had to prevent them from carrying this through thanks to the intervention of the angry soldiers. In sum, Claudius had to placate the soldiers by ordering the Senate to stop the killing and by making Gallienus a God. In fact, according to the *HA* (Gall.19.8), at the time of its writing there were still descendants/relatives of Gallienus surviving in Rome. In other words, the love the soldiers felt towards Gallienus had probably prevented the massacre of his relatives.³⁵

However, despite all of the above, one cannot entirely rule out the possibility that Claudius was indeed unaware of the plot as claimed by some sources and that Gallienus had trusted him for a very good reason. If this version is true, then it is clear that Claudius had not instigated the murders of Gallienus and Valerian and the subsequent murders at Rome, but just stopped the killing of friends and relatives of Gallienus when he became aware of them and then ordered the Senate to deify Gallienus. There is also one additional piece of evidence that lends support for this conclusion, which I present in section 9.2. This would mean that the principal culprits would have been either Heraclianus and/or Aurelian, possibly as a result of a ruse by Aureolus. On balance, however, it is inherently more likely that these sources just attempted to hide Claudius's role in the plot to murder Gallienus, and my own educated guess is that Claudius and Heraclianus were the prime movers in the plot and Aurelian with his subordinate Cecropinus were their willing collaborators and co-conspirators. This has actually been the conclusion of most historians.



Top: The illustration (Patin, 1671) shows the reverses of the coins struck at Thessalonica, Nicomedia, Cyzicus, Ephesus and Smyrna during the reign of Gallienus. All of these cities were targeted by invaders during the reigns of Valerian and Gallienus. Note the ship on the coin of Cyzicus. It celebrates the presence of the HQ of the Black Sea Fleet, and not without reason as it protected the city effectively during the great Gothic invasion of the years 267-269.

Chapter Eight

The ‘Effeminate’ Man who Performed Manly Feats

Gallienus was indeed a man moulded in heroic ideals – he was a man who was always prepared to put his life on the line to prove his manhood in combat and his right to rule as a god on earth. His reign was marked by chaos brought about by continuous foreign invasions and a string of domestic usurpers. Gallienus was constantly forced to march from one front to another in order to survive, and his only goal was to survive. I agree with Lukas de Blois that Gallienus probably did not have any master plan to reform the Roman Empire because all of his so-called reforms (the creation of a cavalry army, the creation of new offices, the restrictions put on senatorial careers, the in-depth defence, the new forms of propaganda etc.) were ad hoc emergency measures. Furthermore, as I have shown, it is clear that the so-called cavalry reform of Gallienus was actually not a reform at all, but the restoration of the cavalry army that had been lost under Decius. Gallienus just improvised, but he did that well and we should remember that all good commanders and armed forces need to be able to adapt themselves to the circumstances and that nothing in life is static. A good modern example of this has been the need to adapt the armed forces of the USA and its allies to the new threat posed by guerrillas and terrorists after 11 September 2001 and then again to the new situation after 2014. This ability or inability to adapt the strategic solutions and tactical methods stand as the best tests of the quality of leadership and armed forces.

Fortunately for the Romans, Gallienus usually appears to have found the best solution to each new problem. The most important of these reforms was indeed the re-creation of the elite cavalry army commanded by gifted commanders and it was thanks to this that the remaining invaders and usurpers were eventually defeated under Aurelian. The above account should also finally put to rest all those revisionistic comments made by some historians post ca. 1980 against the cavalry reform of Gallienus. The massive amount of circumstantial evidence together with the clear evidence presented above regarding the separate use of cavalry and infantry in battles makes it very clear that Gallienus did indeed fight most of his battles with cavalry, as was claimed by Alföldi and others. My use of military treatises and military probability supports the basic validity of their arguments.

The silence of the hostile sources suggests that Gallienus' forces never suffered from the lack of provisions. This shows that he always paid particular attention to logistics, which was even more challenging in a situation in which he had significantly increased the number of cavalry in his army. This was no mean feat in a situation in which he faced a string of financial challenges resulting from the multiple invasions and revolts. His great skills at logistics are proven by the fact that it was his enemies who were subjected to the hardships of hunger and not his own forces.

The frantic efforts of Gallienus had ensured the survival of the core parts of the Empire for his successors. He was also the man responsible for the strengthening of the naval forces in the eastern Mediterranean which enabled the Romans to weather the massive Gothic invasion. Most importantly, his successful defence of Italy in 259–260, and then of the Balkans against the massive invasion of the Goths and others in 267–268 deserves our admiration. The late-fourth and early-fifth-century military leaders and emperors were far less successful against similar numbers of Germanic invaders with the result that the Roman defences were overrun and even the city of Rome fell to the invaders in 410. The situation did not improve after that. Despite his great gifts as a commander Aetius could not achieve similar successes to Gallienus. Even the great soldier emperor Aurelian was defeated so severely in an ambush at Placentia by the Marcomanni (the allies of Gallienus and fellow tribesmen of Pipa/Pipara) in late 270 or early 271 that he came very close to losing the entire war.¹ This is in great contrast to Gallienus, who is not known to have suffered any such major defeat during his long career and certainly not as a result of ambush as happened to Aurelian – only small setbacks which were followed by success. In fact, it is probable that the 'defeats of Gallienus' were something that was typical for cavalry warfare and which would not even have been called defeats by nomadic peoples – namely that when Gallienus' cavalry was not able to defeat the enemy outright it just withdrew like the nomads and renewed the fight later. This proves how great a success Gallienus achieved.

It was probably during the reign of Gallienus that the Roman cavalry reached its apogee of combat efficiency. In the west it was the *equites* of Gallienus that dominated the battlefields, while in the east it was the cataphracts of Odaenathus that did the same. There were obviously also other periods in which the cavalry was the queen of the

battlefield, for example during the sixth century under the great cavalry commander Belisarius and then during the tenth century under the great soldier emperors Nikephoros Phokas and Tzimiskes, but it is still clear that the infantry typically had a far greater role in the sixth and tenth centuries than it had during the reign of Gallienus. It is obviously always dangerous to make comparisons between the achievements of commanders, but when one takes into account the sheer scale of the opposition and the resources available to oppose them, the only Roman cavalry commander who could be counted as the equal of Gallienus was indeed Belisarius, who was able to defeat numerically superior enemies with very few horsemen just like Gallienus was able to do at the battle of Milan in 260.

Gallienus truly is one of the greatest military commanders of all times, even if he was unable to obtain the military initiative in the same manner as for example Caracalla. The only times when Gallienus had the luxury of having the military initiative on his side was when he fought against Postumus and when he sent Odaenathus against the Persians. On all other occasions he was forced to react on the initiative taken by others. One could therefore criticize Gallienus for inactivity during the years 264–265, but then this would not take into account the reality. Despite his apparent inactivity, he was still quite evidently active in reorganizing his realm after the chaos and preparing his own forces for the major attack against Postumus which took place in 266. He was apparently unaware of the developments that were taking place on the steppes and which resulted in the massive invasion of Roman territory by the Goths and their allies. The probable reason for this is that the Romans appear to have lost their spy network in the area when the Goths became the dominant power in the Crimean area in the 250s.

The above does not mean that Gallienus' reign as a whole was a great success. At the time of his death, Gaul was ruled by usurpers, Milan was in the hands of Aureolus, the East was about to become the private domain of Zenobia, and the war in the Balkans was still ongoing. In addition to this, the frantic and erratic monetary policies of Gallienus had created a situation in which the populace no longer trusted in the value of their coins.

As noted above, one can also question the sanity of Gallienus' quite apparent inactivity and loose-living during the years 264–265, when he acted like a tourist at Athens and then spent the whole year of 265 in Italy. It was this that gave his enemies the ammunition to accuse

Gallienus of laziness and of a frivolous life spent in drinking and having sex with whores when he should have been fighting the enemy. The only logical explanation for the inactivity is that by 264 Gallienus was mentally burned out, and may even have suffered from some form of post-traumatic syndrome, and that he also needed time to reorganize his realm for the forthcoming challenges. He clearly needed the rest after having fought continuously from 254 until 264, in the course of which he lost two sons to the cruelty of the usurpers. It is quite possible that it was because of these experiences that he behaved in a manner which seemed so odd to his more conservative contemporaries, but at the same time we should not forget that the drinking and womanizing were (and are) typical of most professional soldiers who face the prospect of imminent death, and it is possible that Gallienus was just attempting to act as their comrade-in-arms to endear himself with the rank-and-file. The fraternizing with the soldiers, and the leading of the men from the front are the typical means employed by most good officers when they seek to make certain that their men obey their orders. Gallienus certainly excelled at this, just as Caracalla had before him.

Gallienus may indeed have been the darling of the rank-and-file, but he was clearly not the favourite of the conservatively-minded Illyrian officers and similarly-minded members of the senatorial class. Gallienus' gender-bending humour, womanizing, barbarian concubine, practical jokes, light-hearted jokes made at socially very inappropriate moments when people expected a more solemn outlook from their emperor, and his cultured upper-class manners did not endear him to the conservative members of the lowly-born officer class, and it was this that probably cost him his life. It is also probable that Gallienus' readiness to grant clemency to the barbarian invaders in return for their surrender and his readiness to bribe these with titles and money in return for military service contributed to his own downfall in a situation in which he failed to shower similar honours and titles on his native officers and was ready to kill mercilessly those Roman soldiers whom he had fooled into surrendering. The very misplaced mercy shown towards Aureolus, not only once but twice, undoubtedly had a role in the anger felt by the Illyrian commanders. It was the second revolt of Aureolus that sealed the fate of Gallienus.



Salonina according to Duruy



Gallienus according to Duruy



Gold medallion. Siscia ca. 264 IMP GALLIENVS P F AVG, laureate, cuirassed bust VIRTVS AVG, bare-headed Gallienus in military dress about to throw spear at the barbarian (German?) who prays to be spared and not speared. This medallion celebrates Gallienus' military qualities and victories over the barbarians. It also propagates Gallienus' readiness to fight in person. Drawing is slightly simplified.

Chapter Nine

Postscript: The Reign of Claudius II 'Gothicus' (ad 268–270) The Ancestor of the House of Constantine the Great



Coins of Claudius struck during his lifetime and immediately after his death (the latter marked with DIVO).
Source: Beger (1696).

The reliability of most of the accounts of Claudius' reign is seriously marred by the fact that he was probably a relative or ancestor of Constantine the Great. Consequently, most of the sources bent over backwards to represent a eulogy of his life and career. The sources give several versions of the family tree of Constantine the Great and Claudius, which has caused most of the historians to suspect the veracity of the claim. Constantius, the father of Constantine the Great, descended either from Claudius or from his brother. Modern historians suspect this story to be a later invention concocted up to create an illustrious ancestor for the emperor. However, I do agree with Bray (321–4) that there must have been at least a germ of truth in the claim, because the future emperor and descendant of Constantius, Julian (*Oration/Panegyric* 1.6.D; *Oration* 2.51.C-D), believed himself a descendant of Claudius. Furthermore, it would not necessarily have

been in the interest of Constantius to stress his imperial heritage at an early stage of his career as Caesar when Diocletian (Diocletianus) could have considered such a claim a threat. Consequently, contrary to the common opinion among modern historians, I do consider it very likely that Constantinus (Constantine) the Great was indeed a descendant of Claudius.

9.1 Siege of Milan and the Death of Aureolus in 268–269

After the assassination of Gallienus, Claudius continued the siege of Milan. Aureolus appears to have negotiated his terms of surrender with Claudius. However, again there are several different versions of this event. The 4th-century Latin sources in particular were at pains to represent Claudius, the supposed ancestor of Constantine the Great, in the best possible light. Claudius is described as a merciful and just man. According to the Greek texts, Aureolus negotiated with Claudius and then surrendered to him, but was then killed by the latter's bodyguard. As usual, there are several versions in the *HA* (*Aureolus*, *Claud.*, *Aur.*): Aureolus asked terms from Claudius, but the latter angrily answered that he should have asked them from Gallienus, and then they fought a battle in which Aureolus was killed by his own men; after the assassination of Gallienus, Claudius met Aureolus in battle and killed him at the bridge of Pontirolo; after Aureolus had surrendered, Aurelian killed him against Claudius' will or Claudius ordered Aurelian to kill Aureolus; Aurelian killed Aureolus only after the death of Claudius.

Let us now analyse the alternatives. Even if we cannot exclude the possibility of two separate battles of Pontirolo, it is more likely that the battle was fought only once, which was between Gallienus and Aureolus but in which Claudius was present as a general. Just as in the case of the Gothic war, the Latin sources give the credit to Claudius. It appears more likely that Aureolus surrendered after he had been promised an amnesty by Claudius II 'Gothicus'. If it was Aurelian who killed Aureolus against the will of Claudius, then this would mean that Aurelian had personal reasons for being angry. This could have resulted from three different causes: it is possible that Claudius had claimed that Gallienus had been killed as a result of Aureolus' actions (a ruse or assassins); it is possible that Aurelian had been fooled by Aureolus' ruse and was therefore angry; it is possible that Aurelian was simply angry with all rebels and usurpers. If Aurelian was angry against all known conspirators and had therefore

killed Aureolus, it is possible that the reason for Claudius to quickly dispatch Aurelian to take charge of the Gothic war was that he wanted to send him far away before Aurelian could learn the truth of the matter. If on the other hand Claudius had ordered Aurelian or his bodyguard to kill Aureolus, then this would have simply meant the elimination of a potential enemy and possibly an attempt to cover up his own cooperation with Aureolus. On the other hand, if Aurelian killed Aureolus only after donning the purple, then this would indicate that he exacted vengeance on all those implicated in the murder of Gallienus at the first instance he was free to do so. In fact, there is a certain amount of plausibility even to this alternative, if we assume that the pro-Constantine sources have covered up the cooperation between Claudius and Aureolus. It is also possible to think that Aurelian killed Aureolus without Claudius' permission and that he had been the principal conspirator against Gallienus and that Claudius had indeed been unaware of the plot to kill Gallienus, and that Claudius was now at loss as to what to do to this overly-savage cavalry commander who was loved by the soldiers, and that it was because of this that Aurelian was dispatched to the Balkans. However, the most likely course of events remains that Claudius had promised a pardon but then simply executed the usurper and that Aurelian was simply his loyal comrade-in-arms.

9.2 Claudius II Secures His Position in 268–269

It was now the new emperor's turn to face the troubles which were all around, but before this Claudius still needed to secure his position and it was thanks to this that he went in person to Rome to obtain the support of the Senate. Since Claudius needed a commander to take charge of the operations against the Goths, he dispatched Aurelian back to the Balkans, presumably in 269, to take charge of the operations there. Claudius appointed Aurelian as commander of all cavalry and at the same time made him commander of the entire Balkans theatre of operations by giving him command of the armies posted in Thrace and Illyricum. In other words, Claudius replaced Marcianus with Aurelian. If Marcianus had not been party to the plot, this should be seen as a necessary precautionary move. This also removed at least some of the still angry soldiers of Gallienus and probably also the Dalmatian cavalry (who feared for their families in the Balkans) from Italy so that Claudius could settle matters in Italy to his satisfaction. If Claudius had been innocent of the killing of Gallienus, it is possible that he may also have wanted to remove the

savage Aurelian, the possible main conspirator, with his forces away from Italy in a situation in which Aurelian had already refused to obey Claudius' orders not to kill the surrendered Aureolus and in a situation in which Claudius deified Gallienus – even if Claudius had been party to the plot, Aurelian's refusal to obey Claudius' orders would have made it necessary for Claudius to remove Aurelian with his men from Italy so that he could secure his position in his absence. It is also probable that Claudius dispatched Heraclianus to the east against the Persians for the very same reason, to remove a potential troublemaker (see above and below). These alternatives are all plausible, but unfortunately the evidence is so meagre that several different alternatives are equally plausible. At the same time Claudius also confirmed Gallienus' prefect of Egypt Tenagino Probus in office and ordered him to clear the coasts of the eastern Mediterranean of the Gothic and Germanic menace with the Egyptian Fleet, which he did in 269.¹

According to the *HA* (*TR.* 29.12, 33), there was also an otherwise-unknown usurper named Censorinus during the reign of Claudius. According to the *HA*, Censorinus was a soldier and a senator with old-time dignity. At the time when he was proclaimed emperor, he was living on his own estates (in Bologna where he was subsequently buried?). This suggests that he was in Italy at the time of the proclamation and therefore probably usurped the power at Rome. Since he was lame in one foot as a result of a wound received in the Persian War under Valerian, he was given the name Claudius as a pun (Claudus = lame).² When Censorinus then proceeded to act with severity and tried to discipline the soldiers (Praetorians?), they killed him. In other words, if there is any truth behind this story, there was a really good reason for the real Claudius II to proceed to Rome to secure his own position and leave the operations against the Goths to Aurelian.³ If the story is true, then it is actually unclear whether the Senate confirmed Claudius II immediately in office. What is clear, however, is that the Senate was glad to get rid off Gallienus and instigated a purge of his supporters and relatives on its own before the arrival of Claudius. It is actually quite possible that the killing of Gallienus' relatives and friends was actually instigated by Censorinus and then stopped by Claudius II only after his arrival and the death of this Censorinus.

What is notable is that, after his arrival at Rome, Claudius sought and gained the support of the important power brokers in the city

such as one Aspasius Paternus (a sort of *eminence grise*), who had been *consul ordinarius* in both 267 and 268, and was therefore an important figure in Gallienus' Rome.⁴ Claudius knew that he not only needed the support of Gallienus' enemies, but he also needed the support of Gallienus' men if he wanted a smooth transition of power. Claudius did not want to become too dependent upon the support of one party alone. He could use the two groups against each other in a game of power. Unlike Gallienus, he did not belong to the Roman aristocracy. He needed their support more than Gallienus had. Claudius had also probably learnt that it was better to keep up appearances rather than needlessly antagonize the power elite of Rome like Gallienus had done. This does also lend some credence to the claims that Claudius was innocent of the murder of Gallienus.

While Claudius was in Rome an embarrassing thing occurred after he had issued an order that nobody was entitled to receive the property of another as a gift from the emperor. It was then that an old woman approached the emperor and complained that Claudius the commander of the cavalry under Gallienus had confiscated her property and had left her penniless. The officer in question was naturally Claudius, who had been rewarded by Gallienus for his loyalty with the property of others. The embarrassed emperor returned the property to the lady. This proves that Claudius was by no means incorruptible, but still had some sense of justice left in him.⁵

9.3 Claudius vs. the Alamanni in 269–270

The transferral of the army under Aurelian to Thrace against the Goths created a power vacuum in the north of Italy and the west of the Balkans, while the previous transferral of troops from Raetia by Aureolus had also left Raetia without adequate defenders.⁶ The Alamanni and Iuthungi exploited the situation and invaded Italy during spring 269. The probable reason for this was that Claudius had murdered the much-beloved Gallienus, who had made alliances with the Iuthungi, Alamanni and the Marcomanni (i.e. the Iuthungi?). As noted above, the 'Marcomanni' had even been given lands in Pannonia in which to settle, while Gallienus took Pipa/Pipara, the daughter of their king Attalus, as concubine to seal the alliance. The breaking up of the alliances alone would have demanded revenge, but it is also more than likely that Pipa was murdered alongside her husband. What is more, Dexippus's (frg. 28) suggests the possibility that Claudius may also have stopped the payment of subsidies to the Iuthungi, even if

Aurelian claims that the Iuthungi had broken the treaty.⁷ Basically, it is probable that Claudius had severed the treaty with the Iuthungi and apparently also with the other tribes that Gallienus had paid money to in return for an alliance. The Germans had very good reasons to invade.

The emperor Claudius marched north from Rome to meet the northern invaders, the Alamanni and Iuthungi, whom he defeated decisively near Lake Garda in 269 or 270 (see the map of Verona).⁸ The invaders had probably advanced either through the Brenner Pass or via the Splügen/Septimer Passes to Lake Garda. It is also probable that Claudius blocked the route of the enemy by placing his army east of the lake so that the army's flanks were protected by the lake and the mountains. This proves that the strengthening of the walls of Verona by Gallienus was a well-chosen precaution. Claudius took the title *Germanicus Maximus* to celebrate his success. In truth, it appears probable that he had engaged only one of the invading enemy divisions and not the whole invading force and that Gallienus' strengthening of Verona with walls and probably also with a garrison had contributed to this success.

After this, Claudius may have hesitated for a while over whether to invade Gaul, or follow the fugitives, or move to the Balkans against other invaders. The reason for this was that the Gallic Empire was in turmoil and ripe for the taking. Firstly, the defeats suffered by Postumus when fighting against Gallienus in 266/7 had lowered his prestige with the result that he was eventually overthrown. Secondly, Postumus had failed to pay enough attention to the problems of Spain. The presence of Franks in Spain is likely to have lowered the silver output of its mines. The Franks, who had invaded in about 259/60, appear to have formed a robber state of sorts in Spain while parts of their force had even reached Africa. This sort of thing did not bolster the prestige of the government. Consequently, Spain declared its support for Claudius at the first possible opportunity. Thirdly, Postumus had been unable to defeat Laelius and had only managed to force him inside Mainz by the spring of 269. As suggested by Watson (44), it is possible that it was at this point that Claudius said his famous words that war against the usurper was his concern, but the war against the barbarians was the state's concern and that the latter should take precedence. In fact, the situation was favourable to this course of action. Because Postumus and Laelianus were still locked in civil war, Claudius was free to fight against the barbarians. Even

though, Claudius did not advance into Gaul in person, he could not entirely resist taking advantage of the situation. He sent Placidianus to Narbonensis (see below).⁹

The whereabouts of Claudius after his victory over the Alamanni at Lake Garda is not known with certainty. What is certain on the basis of the above-mentioned quotes is that Claudius was preoccupied with other things while Aurelian fought against the Goths, and that Claudius had left the war against the Alamanni (presumably including the Iuthungi) unfinished before his death because the Iuthungi had already renewed their war while Claudius was still alive.¹⁰ This is quite clear because we find that his brother Quintillus, who had previously been dispatched to the Balkans to assist Aurelian (*HA Aur.* 17.1–4), was at Aquileia at the time of Claudius' death at Sirmium. This is basically proven by the fragment of Dexippus (*Skythika*, Müller FHG, 682ff.) because the Iuthungi invaded Italy only up to the Po. My own educated guess is that Claudius' initial reaction to the lacklustre performance of Aurelian against the Goths was to dispatch his brother Quintillus there with reinforcements with the intention of continuing the war against the defeated Alamanni in person, but that he then changed his mind and decided to march to the Balkans to take command of those operations. Claudius must have feared that Aurelian would not respect Quintillus and would attempt to usurp the power if given command of both armies. In fact, it is quite possible that Aurelian was indeed planning to usurp power and wanted to preserve his forces as intact as possible for this eventual showdown with Claudius. This at least would be the most logical explanation for the strangely ineffective conduct of the war by Aurelian, when it is well-known that Aurelian was one of the greatest military commanders Rome ever had. This in turn does lend some credence to those claims that Claudius had been unaware of the plot to kill Gallienus and that the murder had been initiated by Aurelian. Regardless of the reason, it was certainly a safer option for Claudius to dispatch Quintillus back to Aquileia to protect Italy against the Iuthungi while he advanced in person to the Balkans. The plan, however, did not work because Claudius contracted the plague (or was he poisoned by the henchmen of Aurelian?) and died, probably in August 270.

9.4Gallic Empire 269–273

While Claudius continued his campaign against Aureolus, Postumus had managed to shut Laelianus inside Mainz. As noted above, Postumus' general Victorinus took the city after a long and very difficult siege. The sinister plotting of Victorinus and his mother Victoria/Vitruvia probably caused the soldiers first to kill Postumus, then elevate and kill Marius, and then elevate Victorinus as their lawful emperor, all apparently in 269. According to the *Epitome* (34.3), Victorinus began his rule at about the same time as Claudius defeated the Alamanni near Lake Garda (Benacus), which must have happened in 269.

Claudius seems to have tried to exploit the troubles facing the Gallic Empire by sending Julius Placidianus (his prefect of *vigiles*) to lead an invasion of Narbonensis in 269. Placidianus seems to have achieved some success, because his invasion was commemorated with an inscription at Grenoble. The inscription at Gratianopolis (Gallia Narbonensis) states that Placidianus' forces consisted of both *vexillationes* and *equites* (Saxer 57–8). In this case it is clear that the *vexillationes* must have also included infantry in the old sense, otherwise there would not have been any need to specify the *equites* separately. At the same time, the Spanish provinces also declared their loyalty to the new emperor. However, the accession of the militarily-talented Victorinus stabilized the situation for a while. When Autun revolted next year, they received no support from Claudius. He or members of his administration were in no position to help, because the Alamanni, Iuthungi, Marcomanni, Sarmatians, and Goths (the Gothic tribes of the Greuthungi, Tervingi and Visi plus the Heruls, Peucini, Gepids and Bastarnae) were still roaming the Balkans, and the Palmyrenes had begun their conquest of the eastern half of the Empire.

Postumus' successor Marius was in his turn soon killed by Victorinus. Placidianus' invasion in its turn caused the Gallic Aedui in their fortified city of Autun to revolt against Victorinus in early 270, but contrary to the expectation of its citizens, Placidianus did not come to its rescue. He appears to have played for time because he probably did not possess enough men, and then came the news that Claudius had fallen ill and died in late August. Consequently, Victorinus was able to besiege the city at his leisure. The siege lasted for seven months, after which the city was pillaged and its citizens deprived of their lives and possessions or, if they were lucky, only of their possessions.

Victorinus returned in triumph to the north and established his capital at Cologne. Victorinus' power was based on his own military skills and on the money and intellect of his mother Victoria, who was the real power behind the throne and was given the title of 'Mother of the Camp'. Unfortunately for the Gauls and Victoria this was not the end of the turmoil, because Victorinus was a hopeless womanizer who was in the habit of seducing the wives of the soldiers and officers. Gallienus did not make this mistake. When Victorinus attempted to seduce the chaste wife of his *actuarii* (quartermaster) Attitianus, the latter formed a plot with the other officers and assassinated Victorinus at Cologne in early 271.

As noted by Drinkwater (1987, 38), the conspirators did not have any further plans beyond revenge and therefore did not name their own emperor to replace Victorinus. This left the field open for Victorinus' mother Victoria to fill the power vacuum and bribe the army with a sizable sum of money to accept her candidate Caius Pius Esuvius Tetricus as their new emperor. Tetricus was governor of Aquitania, which at the time was a border province. This implies that, despite his senatorial background, Tetricus still had a military background and was therefore acceptable to the soldiers. In fact, this is proven by the fact that Tetricus defeated some Germanic invaders (probably the Alamanni with some possible allies such as the Burgundi) who had taken advantage of the situation while he was en route to the north to take the throne.

Tetricus was able to reach Cologne only towards the end of the year, and he was once again forced to fight against the Germanic invaders in early 272. After this campaign, Tetricus established his capital in Trier, where he celebrated his Germanic victory and second consulship on 1 January 273. The probable reason for the transferral of the capital is that Cologne was the powerbase of Victoria and Tetricus wanted to transfer his capital away from there. After this, there were obviously some problems, because Tetricus was not present in his capital and was forced to debase his coinage and canvass support from the troops by making his son Caius Pius Esuvius Tetricus II his official heir. This suggests that there was either a serious invasion by some of the Empire's Germanic neighbours or that Victoria had raised someone else to the throne against whom he had to fight. The former alternative receives support from the fact that the Germanic peoples were on the move at this time, while the latter receives support from the fact that Victoria disappears from the

sources at this time. It is possible that both things happened, but in light of the extant evidence it is almost certain that at least the latter happened. As further evidence for this alternative one can add that the extant sources state that Tetricus had so much trouble with his soldiers that he feared for his life, as a result of which he begged Aurelian to invade in 274 and then immediately deserted to Aurelian's side at the first possible opportunity. In fact, according to Aurelius Victor's account (35), Tetricus' soldiers were constantly attempting to kill him thanks to the bribes given by the governor Faustinus, which does suggest a revolt by Faustinus that Tetricus could not put down. Tetricus spent late 273 and early 274 in Trier, after which he marched to meet Aurelian in battle on the Catalaunian Fields where he surrendered himself in return for a pardon.

9.5 Gothic War 268–270

As noted above, while Claudius had been preoccupied with the war against the Alamanni and Iuthungi amongst other things, the long and gruelling war against the Goths and their allies continued unabated. The blundering attack of the cavalry against the Gothic *carrago* at Mt. Haemus and the subsequent transferral of troops to Italy had allowed the barbarian warriors to continue their ravages. The surviving Goths, who were suffering grievously from the plague, tried to retreat northwards. At first Marcianus with great success and then his successor Aurelianus with less success shadowed and harassed them. The pangs of hunger seem to have forced some of the enemy forces to surrender and become soldiers or tillers of Roman land, but a very significant number of them still managed to fight their way back home. Most of these seem to have consisted of those who had stayed in their ships and boats. According to the *HA (Claud. 12)*, some of the surviving Scythians (Goths, Heruls etc.) attempted to plunder Crete and Cyprus, but their forces were stricken by the pestilence and they were therefore defeated. On the basis of this and the above analysis, it appears probable that these enemies indeed did finally surrender to the Egyptian fleet under Probus only in 269. Some of the surviving Goths also tried to seize Anchialus and Nicopolis when they retreated northwards, but they were supposedly defeated by the valour of the provincials (*HA Claud. 12*). This is another good example of the tendency of the *Historia Augusta* to whitewash the failures of Claudius' rule. According to Ammianus (31.5.16), the barbarians sacked both Anchialus and Nicopolis at this time.¹² Consequently, in truth neither the locals nor Aurelian could defend Nicopolis and Anchialus and both

cities were sacked. The probable reasons for Aurelian's lacklustre performance is that he had inadequate forces to defend the whole of the Balkans thanks to the fact that he had been forced to give part of his army to Heraclianus for Heraclianus' eastern campaign earlier in 269 and that he wanted to preserve his own army for a possible usurpation attempt.

I would connect the possibly fictitious letter of the *HA* from Claudius to Aurelian with this lack of bold action. According to this letter, Claudius hastened Aurelianus on and asked why on earth he was delaying. The letter also stated that the Goths were ravaging Haemimontum and Europe, and that Aurelian would have to drive the Goths away from Thrace at all cost. In addition, Claudius sent his brother Quintillus with reinforcements, but as noted above it is possible that he then changed his mind and decided to take charge of the campaign in person.¹³ The forces ravaging Haemimontum clearly mean the city of Nicopolis ad Istrum and in the Thrace the city of Anchialus. However, it is possible that the actual sacking of the two cities occurred only after the death of Claudius and would have resulted from the transferral of troops to the west by Aurelian who was trying to secure the throne for himself.

9.6 The Rise of Palmyra 268–271

In the meantime, regarding the situation in the east, in late 268 or 269 Zenobia appears to have concluded a truce or peace with Persia in the name of her son Vaballathus. This put a stop to the trade embargo that must have harmed Palmyra's commercial interests.¹⁴ As noted above, the thing that may have pushed Zenobia into revolt was the arrival of Heraclianus, whose official mission was probably to attack the Persians while attempting to get rid of Zenobia. It is indeed quite possible that Heraclianus and Zenobia campaigned together against the Persians before Zenobia crushed Heraclianus because one inscription gives Claudius the title *Parthicus Maximus*. This sequence of events puts the beginning of the 'revolt' of Zenobia in the spring of 270. The reason for this conclusion is that the mint at Antioch was closed in the spring of 270, which means that it was at that time that she launched her revolt against Claudius. The interruption in the minting lasted until the winter of 270/271, when the mint issued coins with the joint names of Vaballathus and Aurelianus.¹⁵ It seems probable that some of the Roman armies that Gallienus had placed under her command continued to obey her commands. She also had

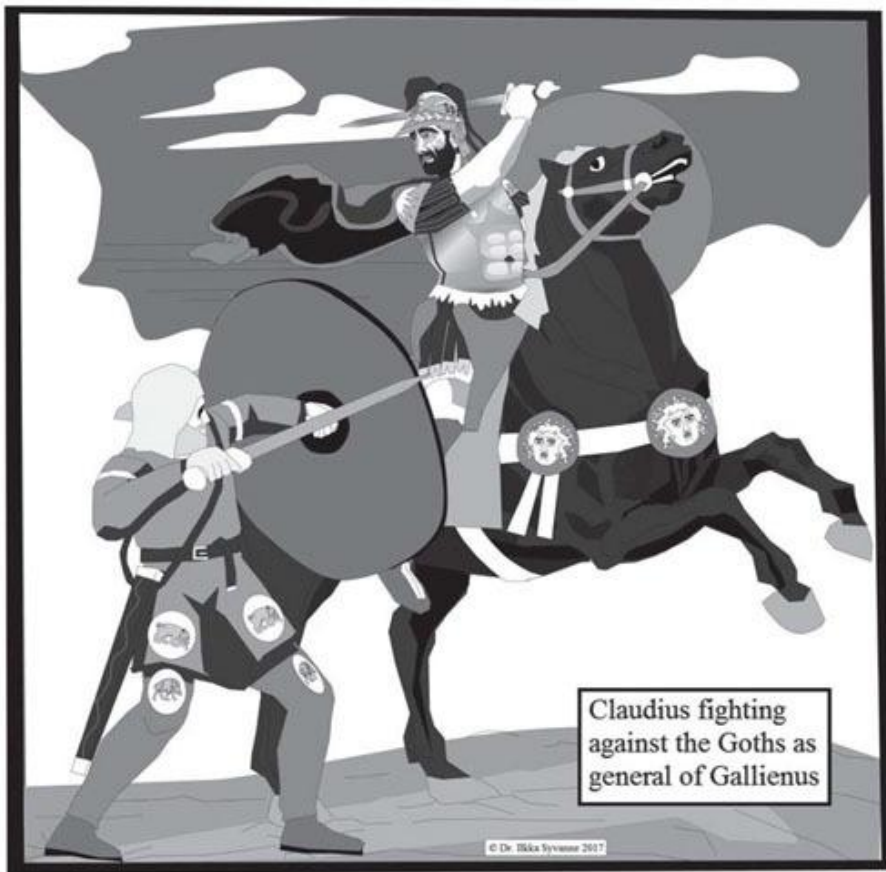
first class advisors, for her new 'prime minister' was none other than the famed philosopher Longinus.

Consequently, Zenobia seems to have taken control of Antioch and Syria during the late spring of 270. Probably immediately after it, she launched an invasion of Asia Minor which was conquered up to Galatia and Ancyra, but the Bithynians overthrew the Palmyrenes when they learnt of the rise of Aurelian to the throne. At about the same time the Pamyrenes also launched a campaign in Arabia under her general Zabdas (Zaba, Saba). Trassus, the *dux* of Arabia, at the head of the local *legio III Cyrenaica* confronted him near the provincial capital of Bostra. Trassus was defeated and killed in action. After pillaging Bostra, Zabdas advanced into the Jordan valley. Finally, having secured both Arabia and Judaea, Zabdas was ready to advance into Egypt.¹⁶

In the meanwhile, after Tenagino Probus had successfully cleared the eastern Mediterranean of the Heruls and Goths, he faced new troubles because in 269/270 the Marmaridae and others revolted. Probus marched to Libya, where he defeated the Marmaridae, and from there all the way to Carthage, which suggests that all or most of the tribes (at this time the Marmaridae with the 'proto-Austuriani', Nasamones, Beitani, Muctunians, Garamantes, Curbisenses, Gaetuli, Frexes, Musulamii, and Aurasitians) between Egypt and Carthage had revolted. Consequently, most of North Africa was in flames. This was a major campaign. We do not know whether the Palmyrenes had any role in this, but in light of the general weakness of the Roman position at this time there is no need to assume this. It is entirely plausible that the Berbers could have exploited the situation on their own initiative. However, what this ensured was that at the time when the Palmyrene commander Zabdas launched his invasion of Egypt in late September or early October of 270, Probus with his forces was not on the scene. The probable reason for the minting of large numbers of coins in the name of Quintillus in Egypt is that as a new emperor Quintillus needed to bribe the soldiers with a donative. The situation in Egypt would have made this even more important, because Quintillus would have needed to secure the loyalty of the troops against the Palmyran invasion.

Sea to the Indian Ocean. Persia controlled both branches of the Silk Road open to Palmyra (Arabia through the Lakhmids and the main route through Persia proper) and it was therefore wise to obtain direct access to India. The possession of Egypt in itself also gave leverage against the Romans because at the time Rome was largely dependent on the grain supplies from Egypt. In addition, Egypt possessed natural riches of its own, such as marble, and the Nile trade route to Aksum and Africa was not unimportant either.

However, thanks to the changes that had taken place in the Roman Empire itself at the same time as the Palmyran offensive, the whole project became an embarrassment. Zenobia had started her campaign because Claudius had violated the peace first, and when she had then learnt of the death of Claudius and of the rise of Aurelian to the throne, she appears to have attempted to negotiate a settlement with Aurelian for she clearly recognized Aurelian as superior to her son Vaballathus. This policy was maintained well into the campaign of Aurelian against Palmyra. Similarly, there is no evidence whatsoever that Zenobia would have cut off grain shipments from Egypt to Rome. This clearly implies that Zenobia was desperately attempting to negotiate with Aurelian until the very end.



9.7 The Inheritance of the Deified Claudius II 'Gothicus'

It is among the greatest ironies of history that the ancient sources credit Claudius with the great victories over the Goths and accuse Gallienus of the revolt of Zenobia in the east. The reasons for this falsification of evidence are: 1) the claim put forth by Constantine the Great and his successors that Claudius was their ancestor; and 2) the hatred of the Roman Senate towards Gallienus.

In truth, Claudius achieved very little as emperor. His only real successes were the crushing of the revolt of Aureolus and the defeating of the Alamanni and Iuthungi invaders close to the city of Verona, where Gallienus had probably placed additional forces at the same time as he strengthened its walls. The Gothic-Heruli invasion of the Balkans had already been decisively crushed when Gallienus was in power and it was only the mopping up of the scattered enemies that were performed under Claudius. In actual fact, it was thanks to Claudius' foolish policies that Zenobia of Palmyra was forced to revolt

against his rule, with the result that Rome lost both east and Egypt – and the loss of Egypt meant problems for the provisioning of the city of Rome and its armies. Claudius' inheritance to Aurelian was poisoned. The situation was even worse than it had been under Gallienus. It needed five years of fighting for Aurelian to restore the Empire and even then he had to abandon two territories to the barbarians: the Agri Decumates and Dacia.

Regardless of the fact that the military situation was far worse after the reign of Claudius than it was after Gallienus, Claudius still deserves praise for his leadership qualities. Firstly, it is clear that he was loved by the officers and soldiers alike. There has to be a reason for this. Secondly, the evidence also suggests that he was a superb cavalry commander. This is proven by the fact that he appears to have had a role in most of the important victories achieved by Gallienus. It is clear that Gallienus appreciated Claudius' abilities because he promoted Claudius as his second-in-command (*hypostrategos/tribunus et magister officiorum*). His career as emperor is simply too short for us to be able to judge his real abilities. After all, he did defeat both Aureolus and the Alamanni during his short reign and was also well received by the Senate. It is entirely possible that he could have continued his string of military successes and rectified his mistake in the east and defeat Zenobia and after that the Gallic Empire in the west, but it was not to be. Consequently, it was Aurelian's fate to become the *restitutor orbis*. My forthcoming monograph *Aurelian and Probus: The Emperors Who Saved Rome* will analyze this in never before seen detail.

Appendix

Old and New Cavalry Units in Gallienus's Cavalry Corps

It is generally agreed that the so-called *Stablesiani*, *Promoti* and *Dalmatae* cavalry units were probably created during the reign of Gallienus. I would also suggest that it is very likely that some of the *Scholae* and *Scutarii* units were similarly created under him. However, it is still probable that there were both types of units in existence prior to his reign and that some of these units were formed after his reign. In my opinion it is also probable that at least some of the *Stablesiani*, *Promoti* and *Dalmatae* units mentioned in the *Notitia Dignitatum* date from the period after Gallienus's reign, because we know that many of Gallienus's cavalry units were destroyed at Placentia at the beginning of Aurelian's reign (*HA Aur* . 21.1–4) and additional units were lost even after that. It is therefore very likely that some of the units included in the *Notitia Dignitatum* date from the period after his reign. Consequently, and contrary to the consensus view, I do not think that all of the *Dalmatae* units were created by Gallienus. It is possible that he did indeed create most of these, but I would not preclude the possibility that some of the units in the *Notitia Dignitatum* would be earlier or later. In fact, it is quite possible that most of the *Dalmatae* units were actually formed by Aurelian to replace the losses he had suffered at Placentia. The reason for this conclusion is that the *Dalmatae* were only one of the cavalry divisions under a single commander during the reign of Gallienus, while there are 25,500 (see below) Dalmatian horsemen in the *Notitia Dignitatum* – it is quite clear that 25,500 horsemen are already an army in their own right and not a single division within an army. In contrast to this, Zosimus's account (1.52.3–4) implies that under Aurelian the Dalmatian cavalry-component formed a very significant force. This is not surprising when one remembers that Aurelian could recruit horsemen only from the Balkans to replace his lost cavalry units. However, when one takes into account that it is likely that the replacements are unlikely to have significantly surpassed the numbers of lost units in a situation in which Aurelian was hard pressed to find enough cash to finance his operations, it is still likely that the list of these units in the *Notitia Dignitatum* gives us a generally-reliable picture of how many new cavalry units there had also been under Gallienus. We should not

forget that Gallienus had similarly been forced to recruit new men and units to replace the units lost under Decius.

It is also clear that some of the *Stablesiani* were in existence already under Caracalla as cavalry bodyguards (see my biography of Caracalla), but the rise of Aureolus from its ranks still suggests that it was Gallienus who increased their numbers significantly. Consequently, I agree with the consensus view, but with the caveat that not all of the *Stablesiani* were created under Gallienus. It is also possible that the *Comites* and *Domestici* were created under Gallienus. I also agree with the previous research that the *Promoti* were legionary cavalry that were separated and elevated to become new cavalry units, but I once again re-date the change. It is probable that it was Gallienus who first created a separate administration for his legionary cavalry units because in some cases their ‘mother’ units were located in enemy territory. They simply needed new administrative organizations in the absence of their regular administration. However, as I have noted in my *Military History of Late Rome Vol.1*, it is probable that most of these units were reattached to their legions after the Empire had once again become united under Aurelian. I include in the list as separate units both *seniores* and *iuniores* units that must in most cases have been single units under Gallienus to bolster numbers with the idea that the duality would compensate for the units lost after Gallienus’s reign.

I have also included all units that have *Illyriciani* in their name in the following list, even if it is uncertain when the title *Illyriciani* was created. The fact that these units include units named *Dalmatae* suggests that the *Illyriciani* were probably created after Aurelian’s campaign against the Palmyrenes (the Dalmatian cavalry clearly formed a separate corps during this war), but before the separation of these *Illyriciani* into separate frontier dukedoms under Diocletian. The other possibility is that the *Illyriciani* were the cavalry corps commanded by Claudius (future emperor) in about 260 when he was *dux totius Illyrici* and that the corps did indeed include *Dalmatae* units. In this case the commander of the Dalmatian cavalry who was involved in the murder of Gallienus would have actually been a commander of one of the Dalmatian units of the *Illyriciani*. My own personal opinion is that this just as viable an option as some other ones.

I will also list all of the *Scholae* and *Scutarii* units because there is plenty of evidence for their existence in this period. For example, the

Chronicle Paschale (ed. Dindorf, pp.501–2) and Cedrenus (ed. Dindorf, pp. 451) both claim that Gordian and Philip the Arab created two groups of *Candidati* (dressed in white) out of the sixth- and seventh-*scholae* to act as personal bodyguards for the emperor. We just do not know their numbers with any certainty, but it still appears probable that there were at least seven *Scholae* units in existence during Gallienus's reign, and that Valerian took with him at least half of these. These *scholarii* would have been the *aulici/protectores/ collegia* of the sources. I have also listed all cavalry *Mauri* units, because we know that these had served as part of the imperial cavalry (in some cases as bodyguard cavalry) at least since the days of Trajan. It is therefore important for me to present a rough estimate for the size of this elite force.

I have chosen not to list a number of the *sagittarii* and other cavalry units in the *Notitia Dignitatum* because their dating is uncertain at best, even if it is certain that some of these units (e.g. the *alae*, *cunei* and *numeri*) existed under Gallienus and may also have been recruited by him. I have estimated the average combat strength for all of these units to have been roughly 500 horsemen, and I have not attempted to remove possible duplicates. I have also not included such units which cannot be dated securely because they have either changed their names or have been raised by some later emperor. These include for example the *Comites Alani* which probably date from Gratian's reign, and the *Comites Clibanarii* (probably raised by Constantius II). When making this selection I have followed as conservative an approach as possible so that I have not included even units such as the *Comites sagittarii iuniores*. However, I have included all those units that include *Parthi*, *Osrhoeni* or *Indiginae* (if these can be identified with the *Osr(h)oeni*) because it is probable that these units were raised either by Caracalla or Alexander Severus – or even before (for example, Augustus had Parthian units), but I have not included any *Persae* units because it is impossible to know when these Sasanian units were raised. It is very unfortunate that we do not know how many of these units were destroyed during the reign of Decius and how many of the remaining units were taken east by Valerian. Readers should also be aware that all of this is very speculative because we do not possess any detailed information regarding the raising of new units – only scattered pieces of information that allow the making of educated guesses.

West (ND Occ.):

1 Comites	500
13 Promoti	6,500
9 Stablesiani	4,500
7 Mauri	3,500
2 Marcomanni	1,000
4 Scutarii	2,000
32 Dalmatae	16,000
5 Scholae	2,500

Remnants of the Parthian, Armenian and Oshroenian forces of Caracalla and Alexander Severus in the Western ND:

2 Parthi	1,000
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Imperial Bodyguard Units possibly called Protectores/Scholae/Aulici:

Domestici equites

Domestici pedites

Schola scutariorum prima

Schola scutariorum secunda

Schola armaturarum seniorum

Schola gentilium seniorum

Schola scutariorum tertia = c. 2,500 horsemen plus the domestici (on the basis of the Decennalia celebrations in 262 it is probable that Gallienus had only seven scholae which are included for the eastern empire in the Notitia Dignitatum, see below. However, I have here included both halves because it is possible that Gallienus could have left part of his scholae bodyguards at Milan for example under Aureolus to protect the north of Italy while he was himself celebrating at Rome. However, it is also possible that these 2,500 horsemen were

meant to replace the Praetorian Horse Guard that was disbanded in 312)

East:

2 Comites	1,000
23 Promoti (+ 1 included in the Dalmatae)	11,500
19 Dalmatae (includes 1 promoti Dalmatae)	9,500
17 Scutarii	8,500
7 Stablesiani	3,500
5 Mauri	2,500

Imperial Bodyguard Units possibly called Protectores/Scholae/Aulici:

Domestici equites

Domestici equites et deputati eorum

Schola scutariorum prima

Schola scutariorum secunda

Schola gentilium seniorum

Schola scutariorum sagittariorum

Schola scutariorum clibaniorum (dating uncertain because the title includes *clibaniorum* and the clibanarii were introduced by Constantius II, but it is possible that he just re-equipped *catafractarii* as *clibanarii* or that these were formed out of Parthian or Armenian *clibanarii* during the reign of Alexander Severus)

Schola armaturarum iuniorum (Ostentionales of the HA?)

Schola gentilium iuniorum = c. 3,500 horsemen plus the domestici

Remnants of the Parthian, Armenian and Oshroenian (Parthi, Armeniaci, native forces under Dux of Oshroene) forces of Caracalla and Alexander Severus in the Eastern ND:

11 Parthi/Osrhoeni/Armenians	5,500
The Illyrian Cavalry Army in the Eastern ND	
23 Illyriciani	11,500
Totals in the ND:	
3 Comites	1,500
36 Promoti	18,000
16 Stablesiani	8,000
12 Mauri	6,000
2 Marcomanni	1,000 (it is probable that there were far more Marcomanni than I have given here)
21 Scutarii	10,500
51 Dalmatae	25,500
	70,500

Imperial Bodyguards/Protectores:

12 Scholae	6,000
2 Equites domestici	? (units commanded by domestici/protectores?)
2 Pedites domestici	? (units commanded by domestici/protectores?)

The remnants of the Parthian, Armenian and Oshroenian forces of Caracalla and Alexander Severus in the ND (this is a very conservative estimate because it is certain that a significant number of the *sagittarii* units mentioned in the ND would have been part of this force) would

have consisted of fully armoured cataphracts equipped in Parthian style. The Parthian, Armenian and Osrhoenian cavalry were not the only corps equipped in this fashion, because Alexander Severus armed his own men with 10,000 cataphract armours taken from the enemy (*HA Sev. Al.* 56.5) in addition to which came the other cataphract units already in existence:

13 Parthi/Osrhoeni/Armenians

6,500

The Illyrian Cavalry Army in the ND. The date of creation uncertain, but before Diocletian:

23 Illyriciani

11,500

As can be seen from the totals of *Dalmatae* and other units in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, it was quite feasible for Gallienus to form the large cavalry armies mentioned in the sources, which should not come as any surprise because we should always pay more attention to what the sources state than is usually the case among the ultra-conservative branch of Classicists. It should also come as no surprise because this is what the *Strategikon* stated also for the reign of Decius. The Romans were using cavalry armies consisting of myriads of men in the third century.

It is probable that Gallienus would also have had a personal *praesental* core force of infantry, which would have consisted of the *Praetoriani*, *Legio II Parthica* (half of both?) and probably also of the units later known as *Ioviani seniores/iuniores* and *Herculiani seniores/iuniores*, both of which originated from the Balkans, just as the *Dalmatae* cavalry. It is also possible, or even probable in some cases, that the later *legiones palatinae Armigeri* and *Lanciarrii* (attested for the first time in *Legio II Parthica*), and *auxilia palatina Heruli (sen./iun.)* and *Leones* were part of this core formation. This would have given Gallienus access to a minimum of about 22,000 footmen, which he probably bolstered with detachments drawn from other legions and *auxilia*.

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Notes

Chapter 1

1. In some rare cases I have left some of these sources unmentioned in the footnotes because their information (with a referral to the source) has been included in a secondary source that I mention in the note in question.

2. For example, I agree with Alföldi and Potter that the *HA* has purposefully placed events that took place under Claudius to the reign of Gallienus and vice versa.

3. Eugenius incident in: Libanius, 19.13, 20.17–20; PLRE1 Eugenius 1.

4. See my *Age of Hippotoxotai* and papers on academia.edu.

5. I mean those who follow the old and dated methodology, not their political stance.

6. Note, however, that there is no definite concrete evidence for Gallienus being a bisexual as Sidebottom represents him (vol.4, 129–133), but that rather he was a womanizer who could wear feminine dress and act like a woman, possibly as a jest to upset conservative people. In other words, I agree with Bray's excellent analysis (215–225) of the evidence.

7. See Banchich's comments and references in his outstanding re-edition/translation of Peter the Patrician.

8. I have left on purpose some references to earlier Greek editions of the Continuator of Dio untouched for those who want to compare these, because I originally wrote this manuscript in 2008–2009 well before the publication of Banchich's new translation/ edition with commentary.

Chapter 2

1. For those interested in Roman society and military organization, my biography of Caracalla and the MHLR Vol.1 deal with these matters in greater detail. In fact, some of the sentences here have been taken from the former.

2.This is mostly a quote from my Caracalla.

3. The national before the *numeri* is meant to separate the ethnic tribal *numeri* from the regular units which could also be called *numeri* for a number of reasons. For details of the term *numerus/numeri*, see Southern 1989. I will refer to the national *numeri* henceforth with the title *numeri*.

4. These lists are included in MHLR Vol.1 and Caracalla, but in truth I wrote both lists before their publication.

5. For the Roman secret service and the *frumentarii* and *peregrini*, see: Dvornik, 88ff., esp. 102ff.; Sheldon, 250–260; Austin and Rankov, 1995, index; Syväne, 2004; Syväne, 2016.

6. A fuller discussion in Syvanne, Caracalla. See also the discussion of the *collegia/scholae* in this monograph.

7.I have discussed these things already in 2010–2011 and have published its results in *Slingshot*, May 2011 (also available online at academia.edu with an updated version included in this monograph in Chapter 2). For a more detailed discussion of cavalry tactics, see my *The Age of Hippotoxotai* and ‘East Roman Cavalry Warfare and Tactics, 410–641’, three parts (based on a lecture) in *Slingshot* 279 (Nov. 2011), 280 (Jan. 2012), and 281 (March 2012), still due to be posted online at academia.edu website at the time of writing.

8. The *Strategikon* has some overlapping numbers in the use of army sizes for the battle arrays. This probably meant that the generals could vary their formations slightly as needed.

9. This chapter is based on Zahariade (2011), D’Amato (2009b), Rankov, Reddé (highly recommended), Pitassi (2009, 2011), Bounegru and Zahariade (Danubian Fleets), Starr, and Syvanne/Syvänne (2004, 2013–2014, MHLR vol.1, Caracalla).

10. The *Classis Nova Libyca*, and *Classis Africana* were apparently created by Commodus to protect the corn shipments from Egypt (see the sources in the previous note with HA Com. 17.7). Their existence, however, is contested. The same is true of the *Classis Mauretanica*, which some think to have consisted of detachments drawn from other

fleets.

11. Research paper/presentation held at Norfolk in 2014; Herodian 2.14. 6–7; Starr (1943 with 1960); Paulus in Digest 49.18.5 (Levick 2, p.75).

12. This is based on Syväne, 2004 and my presentations 2013–2014 with MHLR Vol.1; Pitassi.

13. A fuller discussion with sources in Syvanne, 2016.

14. See my article dealing with spies on *Historia i Swiat*, 2016.

15. Syvanne, 2011.

16. De Blois, esp. 30–36.

Chapter 3

1. This chapter is entirely based on the analyses of Geiger (73–81) and Bray (15–33). There is no need to reinvent the wheel when it has already been invented. My own additions are clearly marked.

2. I have here departed from the usual dating because we simply do not know anything for certain.

Chapter 4

1. Most of the text in this chapter has been published in ‘Slingshot’ before as ‘*The Reign of Decius*’ (Syväne, 2011). It has been altered or updated only in places necessary to make it conform with the information provided in the rest of the book. The sources for Decius’ reign are fragmentary, late and often unreliable. From the point of view of military history, the best evidence actually dates from the sixth century. These are the works of Jordanes (*Getica*), Zosimus (*New History*), and Maurice (*Strategikon*). The key text is the *Strategikon*, which mentions the use of the sixth-century cavalry tactics by Decius, which can be complemented from the evidence preserved in the other sources. In general, for the life and career of Decius, see: Syväne, 2011 with Brauer, 14–57; Birley, 1990/98; Lorient, 1990/98; Geoffrey Nathan; Robin McMahon; Potter, 2004, 240–7; Southern, 2001, 73–5, 222–3; Goldsworthy (2009), 94–104.

2. In other words, I belong to those modern historians who believe that Eusebius was right in stating that Philip was a Christian. His baptism was the reason why he despaired of his position and had to appoint someone else to take charge of the Balkans campaign. In fact, the probable reason for the lack of other similar claims has resulted from the fact that Constantine the Great and his successors wanted to portray Constantine as the first Christian emperor. See also Körner for the usurpations under Philip.

3. Sextus Aurelius Victor, *Liber de Caesaribus* 29. For the location, see the map of Verona. This city saw two major battles during this era, which proves that Gallienus acted wisely when he strengthened its defences.

4. This and the second reason have been suggested by Potter, 2004, 243.

5. The appointment of Valerian as censor is not accepted by all historians, because it is based on the claim of the *HA*, but note that for example that Zonaras (12.20) also states that Valerian was put in charge of the administration of the state.

6. Maximinus’ father was a Goth and his mother an Alan. Note also that contrary to common opinion I do not consider the persecution of Christians under Decius to have been an unintentional by-product of the requirement for the population to sacrifice to the gods. He knew what he was doing just like the other emperors who initiated projects

that ended up in persecuting the Christians. The same is also true of those emperors who showed tolerance or even favoured Christianity, such as Alexander Severus, Philip the Arab, and Gallienus. They knew full well what they were doing.

7.Banchich (Mareades) collects the evidence regarding this man.

8.This is Birley's (1990/98, 77) very sensible explanation to the lions of the *Chronicon Paschale*.

9.For the Persian Wars from the Persian point of view, see Farrokh, 2007, 186ff.

10.Wolfram, 1988/1990, 45. For the Gothic army and its fighting techniques, see Syv  nne, 2010.

11.In other words, I do not accept Wolfram's suggestion that the Goths divided their army into three parts, but rather follow Jordanes' text. If there was a separate army attacking Dacia, it consisted of an independent and separate force. Jordanes is quite specific that Kniva divided his army into two parts.

12.In other words, I do not accept Goldsworthy's (2009, 104) small figures for the Roman and Gothic armies. Regardless of this minor disagreement, I do still consider his book well worth reading and well written.

13.This account is based on Jordanes 101–103 and the *Strategikon* 4.3.12ff.

14.See McMahon, 2002.

15.Dardania formed part of Moesia, but troops from there may have previously been assigned to serve under the governor of Achaëa, so this information is not necessarily fictitious on that basis.

16.The *HA* (Claud. 13.6ff.) states that Claudius caught the attention of Decius when he was wrestling in the Campus Martius. This would suggest that Claudius belonged to the bodyguard units of Decius and I do not see any reason to doubt this information. This is entirely plausible, and in the absence of evidence to the contrary, I accept this version. It was quite typical for the officers of the bodyguard units to advance to higher posts.

17.For additional details concerning the Gothic wagon laager/fortress (*carrago*), see Syv  nne, 2010 and 2004.

18.For the use of bows by the Gothic elite and their allies, see Syv  nne, 2010. The Germanic Goths had essentially become Sarmatized when they had trekked to the Black Sea, their elite

cavalry had adopted the use of bows while mounted and they had also incorporated Sarmatians and Alans into their ranks. In other words, the Goths were Scythians not just in the sense of their abode, but also because of their use of wagons and horses as some of the period authors stated. In other words, I claim that we should make a distinction between the tactical systems in the sources when they claim that the cavalry lancers were used for charging and when they claim that the cavalry was used for skirmishing with missiles only in the relative amount of archery employed. The former did not necessarily mean that the cavalry lancers would not have employed bows while the latter would not have meant that the cavalry did not use lances. The former was simply a tactic in which the front rankers had lances ready for combat and charged at the enemy as the East Roman cavalry was instructed to do against the Persians. We should remember that the *Strategikon* makes it very clear elsewhere that the rear-rankers used bows while conducting such a lancer charge. The latter skirmishing style nomadic tactic consisted of the use of bows by all those able to use them mounted, the front ranks included, until the enemy had been weakened enough after which the men put away their bows and grasped their lances/ spears and charged. In other words, the skirmishing tactic did not mean that the men would not have used lances/spears.

19.English, translated by Mierow (Jordanes, *The Origin and Deeds of the Goths*, 103).

20.For the location of the city, see Ivanov. The exact location of the battle, however, is not known with any certainty except that it was fought somewhere near the city.

21.See Birley, 1990/98, 78 with Cowan (2007, 182). Cowan considers Decius' charge to have been *devotio*-like and further suggests the possibility that he tried to engage Kniva in single combat. It should still be noted that any comparison to the Decii of old (such as in the *HA*, *Aurelian* 42.6) is still more likely to be the result of later pagan propagandists trying to portray the horrible failure of their favourite in the best possible light.

22.Robin MacMahon: *Damnatio memoriae* in July.

23.Eusebius 7.1; Bray 36ff.; Moore, *Gallus*.

24.Banchich, *Mareades*; Moore, *Gallus*; with REF1 for the actual sources.

25.Banchich, *Uranius*; REF 1, 54ff.; 364, n.30. For the exploits of

Caracalla, see Syv  ne, *Caracalla*.

26. When the sources claim that it was Aemilianus who stopped paying subsidies to the Goths, they are in all probability wrong. It is more likely that Aemilianus acted on Gallus' orders. Had he done otherwise, he would already have proclaimed an open revolt before his military successes against the Goths. It was part of Aemilianus' propaganda that he claimed to have stopped paying subsidies that had been promised by Gallus and had then won a victory against the Goths, while in comparison Gallus had been singularly unsuccessful against them. The real reason for the invasion of 252 would have been the refusal of payments made by Gallus.

27. Bancich, *Aemilianus*; Bray, 36ff.

28. Bachich (*Gallus* and *Aemilianus*) collects the evidence.

29. Zosimus 1.28; Victor 32; Geiger, 82ff.; Bray, 40–43.

30. Bachich (*Gallus* and *Aemilianus*) collects the evidence.

31. This chapter is entirely based on Estiot (with further references therein), but so that I present two additional possible explanations.

32. See e.g. the Curator's comments regarding it on the British Museum's website.

33. Estiot collects the prosopographic and onomastic evidence for the Gallic origins of Silbannacus. In the forthcoming *Aurelian and Probus. Emperors Who Saved Rome*, I will suggest the possibility that Silbannacus was a usurper under Probus.

Chapter 5

1. Orosius 7.22; Eusebius 7.10; Potter, 253–255.

2. This chapter is based on Blois (esp. 9–20, 87ff.); Geiger (200ff.); Bray (193–260); Christol (2006a, 154–156); Moderan (pp.66–67); Southern (2001, 96–97).

3. See Syvänne, *Caracalla*.

4. For example, Christol (2006a pp. 132–133) thinks that Gallienus achieved the German victories.

5. See the discussion in Christol (2006a pp.132–135, with note 4) who collects the evidence and discusses the various theories. Christol dates the move of Gallienus to Gaul to the year 256 on the basis of the transferral of the mint in that year, but in my opinion the year 255 is likelier on the grounds of the other evidence. The events seem to have moved so quickly that Gallienus moved to Gaul with his army and the mint was transferred only after that. It is because of this that one cannot entirely rule out the possibility that Gallienus could also have been in Gaul in 254 as suggested by Alföldi.

6. The question of whether Gallienus really created a separate cavalry force has been a very divisive issue among historians. Ritterling, Wickert, Grosse, Luttwak, Alföldi (e.g. CAH, 183, 215–217), Sidnell (280–1), Southern (2001, 88–90), Strobel (276), Blois (26ff.), Moderan (62ff.) and Bray all agree that Gallienus created a separate cavalry army as an emergency measure to counter fast-moving enemy forces. I agree with their well-argued conclusion: Gallienus created a cavalry army that was responsible for most of the victories he achieved over his enemies, but with the difference that in my opinion Gallienus' re-created it rather than invented it (see main text). See also: Kedrenos/Cedrenus (ed. Dindorf, p.451, p.454.6–10); Zonaras 12.25, with the hypotheses mentioned in this narrative. Other historians have been more hesitant and often include doubts in their discussion. These include: Goldsworthy (2009, 117–8, very sceptical); Southern & Dixon (11–14, express doubts, but on the whole support the creation of a separate cavalry force); Nicasie (36–38) states that Gallienus' central army consisted of both cavalry and infantry, but this is only partially correct as Gallienus was in the habit of using cavalry separately from the infantry when he deemed it advantageous); Bohec (2009, 235–40; 1994/2000, 198), whose opinions have changed. In 2000 Bohec suggested that Gallienus created a new mobile cavalry

force behind the frontier which was a strategic innovation, but in 2009 he changed his view. His latter view is actually correct. Gallienus did not make any strategic innovation because the emperors had always collected separate field armies that they had placed in such strategic locales as was required by the situation. However, Bohec is incorrect in claiming that the infantry would still have remained the queen of the battlefield during Gallienus' reign. As will be shown, during the reign of Gallienus it was his cavalry. The existence of the separate cavalry force has also been doubted recently by Duncan B. Campbell. I do not find his counter-arguments convincing in light of the overwhelming evidence to the contrary. To do so would require the dismissal of mutually-supportive evidence. For example the fact that Zonaras has two different titles for Aureolus does not mean that he could not have held different titles simultaneously or at different points in his career. Another good example of this ultra-conservative nihilistic way to interpret the evidence is to claim contrary to the extant evidence that the referral to the existence of Dalmatian cavalry must actually mean the *equites singulares Augusti*. The nihilistic tendency to dismiss all evidence in the sources with one's own view has become the dominant methodology among academics after 1970s. In my view there is a need to return to the older methodology in which the evidence was analyzed with greater respect (i.e. it was not dismissed without strong reasons to do so), and it is for this reason that I call those who oppose the older source-based approach the 'ultra-conservative Classicist school of thought' – it does not necessarily reflect the political stance of the person, but his/her attitude towards the evidence. The reformers of the years following the 1970s have become the conservatives of today. In truth, in this case there are no good reasons to doubt the conclusions of the earlier generations of historians whose analysis is based on the mutually-supporting pieces of evidence.

7. Alföldi (e.g. CAH, 183, 215–217); Blois (26ff.); Syvanne, *MHLR* Vol.1. According to Zonaras (12.24), Aureolus was a Dacian shepherd who had joined the army and had then been promoted to be an attendant of the imperial stables/horses. It was in this job that he caught the eye of the emperor who then promoted him to the job of commander of cavalry.

8. Pat Southern (2001, 83–88) notes that Gallienus had detachments at least from 17 legions plus the Praetorians serving under him. Of these, at least those whose bases lay in enemy territory needed a new

separate commander and administration to function properly.

9. See above with Syväne (Caracalla, *MHLR* Vol.1 with further references therein).

10. See also Strobel's (271–273) earlier theory regarding the protectores, which seems to resemble mine.

11. For the development of the Roman field army, see Strobel 269–271. Earlier examples of the use of separate cavalry commanders can be found in academia.edu (Syväne, 'Germanicus' and 'Caesar' research papers). It is possible that the *HA* (*Aur.* 9, esp.9.3) means the same type of command for Aurelian (... Aurelianum, fortissimum virum, ad inspicienda et ordinanda omnia destinavimus, ...) as had been exercised by Maximinus, but in this case for the field armies serving in the West (Gaul, Italy and the Balkans) rather than a duty to inspect every military camp in the Empire.

12. See Syväne, 2015.

13. Christol 2006a, 32. Sources collected in REF1.

14. See the narrative later with the sources conveniently collected in REF1.

15. See e.g. *HA/Magie* vol.3 p. 180.

16. I have here accepted Magie's translation (*HA* vol. 3, pp.180–183) for most of the terms and measurements.

17. See e.g. *Magie/HA* 3, p.182.

18. For the use of baths by the Roman armies during campaigns etc. see Syväne, 2006.

19. Mitchell, 1995, 1999.

20. As noted above, Christol (2006a, 132–133) thinks that all of the Germanic victories were achieved by Gallienus while his father was in the east and that Valerian in his turn achieved all the victories in the east.

21. Christol (2006a, 132–135) dates the move of Gallienus to Gaul to the year 256 on the basis of the transferral of the mint, but in my opinion the year 255 is likelier on the grounds of the evidence. The events seem to have moved so fast that Gallienus moved to Gaul with his army and the mint was transferred only after that.

22. No such legion is known, but since the evidence for the third century is so poor one cannot exclude the possibility that such a legion existed.

23. Gregory of Tours 1.32–34; Zos. 1.30; Brauer, 76–80

(fortifications in Gaul, 76–77); Drinkwater (1987, 22; 2007, 146); Geiger 107ff. A good example of the problems relating to the dating is the fact that it is impossible to date the campaign of Chrocus accurately. For example Geiger dates the invasion of Gaul and Italy roughly to the years 260–261. This is quite plausible, but I have here adopted the solution that there were several invasions of Gaul on the basis of the evidence which places Gallienus in Gaul at least in 255–256 and probably also in about 259–260. According to Zosimus 1.37–38, Gallienus was beyond the Alps waging wars against the Germans at the time when the Scythians invaded Italy in about 259–261.

24. According to Magie (*HA* 3, p.214), none of the five ‘third’ legions is known to have possessed the cognomen *Felix*. Thanks to the fact that the evidence for the third century is so poor I am of the opinion that it is entirely possible that there existed a legion that possessed this cognomen and it is because of this that I accept the claim.

25. *HA Aurelian* 8–15). The author claims that Aurelian acted as deputy (*vicar*) for generals (dukes i.e. *duces*) and tribunes on about forty occasions and in addition held very many commands as a general and tribune. The *HA* also claims that Aurelian saw service both in Gaul and Illyricum. In the latter case, he is supposed to have acted as a deputy to Ulpius Crinitus, *dux* of Thrace and Illyricum, during his medical leave. In addition, the *HA* contains a letter supposedly sent by Valerian to Gallus in which he stated that he had left his (grand)son (Saloninus) Gallienus in the care of Postumus, because he considered Aurelian much too stern and harsh and therefore not suited to accompany the merrymaking Gallienus. If there is any basis in truth in this, this sequence of events would suggest that Valerian had left Postumus with Gallienus to act as his advisor. It would also suggest that Valerian appointed Aurelian as a deputy general of Crinitus in 255 or 256. During Crinitus’ absence in 255 Aurelian distinguished himself with the result that when Valerian returned to Byzantium in 255, he ordered Crinitus to adopt Aurelian as his son and appointed Aurelian to the positions of consul and inspector of all army camps. Notably, the latter is the same position that Maximinus Thrax is also supposed to have held as a reward and from which position he rose to become the emperor after the murder of Alexander Severus. White (50ff.) also believes that Crinitus was a real person, but dates the events differently.

26. *HA Aurelian* (6.1–2; 8.1ff) with Magie’s comment on p.208.

27. After 262, Gallienus' second-in-command (*hypostrategos*) appears to have been the future emperor M. Aurelius Claudius, which is not surprising if Aureolus did indeed attempt an usurpation in ca. 261 as appears probable (see below). The *HA* stated that he was of Dalmatian or Illyrian origin. The *Epitome* mentions that he was the child of the emperor Decius by an experienced lady who had been sent in to instruct the future husband into the secrets of lovemaking at the time of his wedding night. The fatherhood of Decius also receives support from the letter of *HA* (*Claud.*, 16) which, if authentic, shows that it was Decius who promoted Claudius' career after he had become emperor. And if we can put any trust in another letter in the *HA* (*Claud.*, 15), Decius' close friend Valerian also seems to have advanced him to the position of *dux totius Illyrici*. Notably, if Claudius indeed was sired by Decius, then it would also be in accord with his quite conservative nature. However, none of this is certain.

28. With the exception of the Libyas, the following is based on Bohec, 2005, 82–86; Saxer, 53–4; Christol (2006a, 135).

29. Christol, 2006a, 135.

30. Peter the Patrician F179; Bray (67–8) after the anon. continuator of Dio (vol. 1, p.194) considers the emperor to have been Gallienus, but in my view Valerian is likelier.

31. See: *HA Triginta* (=TR.) 3.9ff.; *HA TR.*, 10.14ff.; PLRE1 *Aureolus*, *Claudius 11*, *Theodotus 4* (and sources mentioned therein). It is clear from a fragment of Peter the Patrician (f181) and the *HA* (*TR* 10.10–13) that Claudius accompanied Gallienus during the period ca. 257–260. The same is true of Aureolus, whose presence is similarly mentioned. The case of Theodotus is uncertain because he was an Egyptian by birth and appears to have defeated the usurper Aemilianus in Egypt as *dux Gallieni* and another usurper Memor in Africa in about 262. According to the *HA* (*Gall.* 4.1–2) and PLRE1, he was appointed as *praefectus Aegypti* in about 262–263(?) as a reward for having crushed the revolt of Aemilianus. It is probable that he served under Gallienus before the Egyptian campaign and was then sent back to crush the revolt in Egypt. The reasons for this conclusion are: 1) it is probable that Theodotus and Gallienus would have known each other for Theodotus to have been appointed as *dux Gallieni*; 2) the title *dux Gallieni* implies that he had been dispatched by Gallienus; 3) the *HA TR* 22.8 states that Theodotus was sent by Gallienus to crush the revolt in Egypt which implies that he had probably been accompanying Gallienus until then; and 4) the Egyptian background

would have made Theodotus an ideal candidate for the army sent to crush the revolt in Egypt. None of this is conclusive. It is possible that Theodotus could have been a commander of some forces in Libya or North Africa and that he would have just led these forces against the rebels.

32. See Potter (255) with Bray (94ff.) and the *HA* (*TR* 14.3ff = *Quietus*).

33. For example, see Tacitus, *Histories* 5.15–19; *HA Sev. Alex.* 61.8; *HA Maxim* 11.7ff.; *Herodian* 7.2.1; the *Chapter dealing with Decius; Syvanne, The Age of Hippotoxotai, Germanicus*. The shorter Roman legionaries in heavy equipment who were wearing sandals were at disadvantage in the swampy terrain against the lightly-equipped, boot- or shoe-wearing, taller Germans. However, in contrast, the Roman horseman was at the same time speedier than his enemy and at higher elevation, giving him the advantage. It should be noted, however, that by the third century the Germans no longer had any advantage resulting from footwear because the Romans had adopted German-style shoes.

34. *Zos.* 1.31ff.; for the locations of the Roman naval bases, see Syvanne, *Caracalla* (after Redde and Batty).

35. *Zos.* 1.32ff. with Brauer, 88–91.

36. See Syvanne, *Odin the Man* available online at academia.edu together with Syvanne, *Britain in the Age of Arthur*.

37. Valerian's whereabouts in 257/8 can be pinpointed on the basis of *Zos.* 1.36.1. SKZ can be found in REF1. For the siege of Dura Europus, see the outstanding study by Simon James (2004/2010). Sidebottom describes a fictional version of the siege (siege of Arete) in his *Warrior of Rome 1. Fire in the East*.

38. Valerian disappears from the sources at the same time as Ingenuus usurped power.

39. Various theories collected by Bray (72ff.) and Geiger (96ff.). See also Drinkwater's analysis (2007, 52ff.) regarding the dating of the usurpation of Postumus on the basis of the inscription found at Augsburg (Augusta Vindelicum) in August 1992.

40. According to Zonaras (12.24), Aureolus was a Dacian (Getic) herdsman who had joined the Roman cavalry. Under the protective wings of Gallienus, Aureolus became the first ever commander of the mobile cavalry corps by 258. Aureolus was Gallienus' protégé despite having been initially promoted by Valerian.

41. For details, see Syv  ne, *The Age of Hippotoxotai* (esp. 118ff.).

42. For further details concerning the *equites Mauri*, see Hamdoun   (149ff.) and Speidel (Riding, see index Mauri). This cavalry guard was annihilated in 388 (see Syv  ne, MHLR Vol.2 after Pacatus 45.5). The Moorish cavalry Guard was not the only Moorish/ Mauretanian cavalry unit in Roman service. The Moors were already a very famous cavalry corps under Trajan and Hadrian, and Mauretanian units can still be found in the *Notitia Dignitatum* (turn of the fifth century.). In addition to the more famous cavalry units, there were also units of Moorish infantry in existence.

43. According to *HA* (*TR.*, 9.3ff.), Gallienus vented his anger on all Moesians – soldiers and civilians alike. However, it seems probable that the unknown author (supposedly Trebellius Pollio) misunderstood his sources. Previously, the author had stated that Ingenuus was the ruler of the Pannonias and that it was the Moesian legions that proclaimed Ingenuus emperor while the Pannonian legions assented. The author has simply taken the Moesian legions to mean the province, whereas in actuality the fighting occurred in Pannonia. Both Mursa and Sirmium were situated in Pannonia and it is likely that most of the butchery took place there because these lay so close to the site of the battle! Additional support for this conclusion comes from the fact that Gallienus subsequently found it feasible to transfer and resettle allied Marcomanni in one of the Pannonias. It needed repopulating, but of course it is possible that Moesia was indeed pillaged now and Pannonia only after the revolt of Regalianus – especially so as the resettlement appears to have taken place only after the revolt of Regalianus.

44. Could this be the same man as the general Venerianus in the *HA Gall.*, 13.7?

45. Peter the Patrician f.180. See also for example, Bray, 76–77; Alf  ldi, 184.

46. The coins mentioned in Blois, 107.

47. Bray (68) collects the evidence and arguments.

48. See below: *HA Claudius* 17 (Gallienus' letter to Venustus).

49. *Aur. Vict.*, *Caesar* 33.6; *Aur. Vict. Epit.* 33.1; *HA (Gall.)* 21.3).

50. For the marital status, see: Bray 31–32, 121–125.

51. Names of the locations and detachments in Blois, 31; Saxer 55–7. Saxer dates the *vexillationes* and their *auxilia* posted at Sirmium according to the revolt of Ingenuus, which he dates to the year 260 so

that the detachments would have been posted there from 260 until 268. Saxer dates the *vexillationes* placed at Lychnidus in Macedonia according to the revolt of Regalianus, which he places to the year 260 so that the *vexillationes* were posted there from 260 until 268. Saxer dates the posting of *vexillationes from legions V Macedonica and XIII Gemina/Gallieniarum at Poetovio to the years 260–268, those of X Gem., XIV Gem., I Adi., and II Adi.* probably to the reign of Gallienus.

52.Names of the locations and detachments in Blois, 31; Saxer 55–7.

53.Names of the locations and detachments in Blois, 31; Saxer 55–7.

54.There had to be enough time for them to threaten Rome before the arrival of Gallienus in the arly spring of 260.

55.Gallienus was a notorious womanizer and know for his gluttony and luxurious style of living: see also the discussion on the context of Gallienus' murder.

56.*HA Claud.* 17 (Gallienus' letter to Venustus).

57.Discussion of the sources and conditions of withdrawal in Batty (368).

58.Parker, p.176.

59.I have already noted in my *MHLR vol.1* (p. 418, n.212) that these units had not been raised by Diocletian and Maximian, but only renamed.

60.These cannot be any of the other legions named above because these can be found in the *Notitia Dignitatum*, alongside the *Ioviani* and *Herculiani*.

61.Parker, pp.175–9; Nischer, 1–2.

62.Inscription in REF1 (Dodgeon & Lieu), 57. For an alternative interpretation of the wars of Shapur against Valerian and Odaenathus that are analysed below, see Kaveh Farrokh, 2007, 188–190. I have accepted the year 259 as the likeliest date for the capture of Valerian, but the opinions of the academic community are widely divided on this issue. Sidebottom also describes the events that took place under Valerian in vol.2 (see esp. 367ff.), but places the capture to the year 260.

63.See *HA Val.* 1–3; Cedrenus (p.454); Leo Grammaticus (p.78); Syväanne, *The Age of Hippotaxotai*, Chapter 10.1 (esp. p.334, after Menander f.23.1); Syväanne, *MHLR vol.1*.

64.Evidence usefully collected in REF1 57ff.

65.Evidence usefully collected in REF1 57–66.

66.The fact that the HQ of Macrianus was located at Emesa has usually been used as evidence that he withdrew there. This conclusion seems correct to me.

67.See next note.

68.REF1, 70–71 with notes.

69.Evidence very usefully collected in REF1 70ff. Harry Sidebottom gives a fictitious but still a fact-based narrative of the revival of Roman fortunes under Ballista and Macriani and of their fall and the exploits of Odaenathus in vol. 3.

70.The list of cities in Shapur's list of taken cities in the SKZ together with the Armenian sources Agathangelos (2.35–36) and Moses Khoranatsi (2.76) suggest the probability that Shapur advanced to Cilicia against a Roman relief army while another Roman army was defeated when attempting to help the Armenian fugitive ruler Trdat (Tiridates). Agathangelos states that Shapur routed a Greek (i.e. Roman) army that had been sent to assist the Armenians and pursued them up to the border. The fact that Armenia was still independent at the time of Valerian's capture (*HA Val.* 1–4) means that its ruler was a regent ruling in the name of Tiridates/Trdat and that the subjection of the country by the Persians took place in about 260. According to Moses' version, the Persians defeated the Greek (Roman) army that had been sent to support to Artavazd (Artavesdez) the Mandakuni and Tiridates against the Persians. He claims that Tacitus (to be interpreted as a Roman general) then marched to Pontus and sent his brother Florian (also to be interpreted as a Roman general, possibly the Demosthenes) to Cilicia in response to which Ardashir (= Shapur) in his turn routed Tacitus with the result that both Tacitus and Florian were killed by their own men.

71.For speed of travel of messages, see Syväanne, 2016 (generously supported by ASMEA Research Grant).

72.Peter the Patrician f.175–176. See also the abovementioned sources collected in REF1 with Festus 23.2. Brauer (133–137) has reached the same conclusion that Odaenathus must have defeated Shapur when he was returning home, after which Odaenathus pursued Shapur up to Ctesiphon until he was recalled back by Gallienus to crush the remnants of the revolt of the Macriani under Quietus and Ballista.

Chapter 6

1.E.g. Aur. Vict. *Caes.* 33; Zos. 1.36–37.

2. There is nothing incredible in the figure of 300,000 for the strength of the entire Alamanni and Iuthungi confederation of tribes. The Germans had migrated in strength before (Teutones and Cimbri during Marius' day; Helvetii and Ariovistus during Caesar's day) and continued to do so in the future (Goths, Heruli, Vandals, Franks, Burgundi). Subsequently, there were also other peoples and tribal confederations on the move, of whom the most notable examples are the Huns, Avars, Bulgars, Hungarians, Cumans and Patzinaks. Consequently, there are very strong reasons to put more trust in the huge figures given by the sources than is usually done these days. In order to settle large tracts of land, the Germanic peoples needed quite sizable populations, and as we well know, the Germanic peoples eventually occupied France, Italy, Spain and North Africa. The notable thing is the absence of the Alamanni from this list. The Romans were able to defeat them so completely in the course of the 3rd-4th centuries that they came to inhabit Germany (*Allemagne*). For the opposite view on the fighting strength of the Alamanni, see Drinkwater, 2007, 71. See Drinkwater (2007, 43ff.) with Syv  nne (*Caracalla*) for different theories regarding the origins of the Alamanni.

3. The *Strategikon* 11.4, English tr. by the late master George T. Dennis pp.125–126 with some changes, and additions/comments inside parentheses:

‘... If there is only one suitable road [*in my opinion it is likelier that Gallienus would have advanced from one direction only rather than from two directions towards each other because his force was so small that he would have wanted to keep it together*] by which it is possible to invade the settlements [*in the Strategikon these mean the Slavic settlements, which in my opinion can be equated with marching camps in terms of tactics*], the army should still be divided. The *hypostrategos* [*lieutenant general in Dennis*] must take half or even more of it [*i.e. the first line of the standard cavalry battle array, which he commanded in pitched battles*], a strong force and ready for battle, without a baggage train. His own *bandon* [*200–400 men*], with himself in his proper place, should advance at the head of the whole force, and accompanying him should be all the *tagma* commanders. When his force approaches the first settlement, he should detach one or two *bandons* so, while some go

about pillaging, others may keep guard over them. It is wise not to detach too many *bandons* for the first settlements, even if they happen to be large ones. For when our army arrives, there is no time for the inhabitants to organize any resistance [*this instruction was undoubtedly correct for the situation in which the sixth-century East Romans faced the Slavs, but if Gallienus used this tactic against the Alamanni camps then his hypostrategos, who is likely to be Aureolus, would probably have detached more men because it is unlikely that the Alamanni marching camps would have been as small or as disorganized as the Slavic settlements*]. The *hypostrategos* should continue his advance rapidly, while still carrying out the same procedure at the rest of the settlements along the way as long as there are enough *tagmas* under his command. The *hypostrategos* ... should retain for himself three or four *bandons*, up to a thousand capable men, until the invasion is completely finished, so he can see to reconnaissance and security for the rest of the troops [*i.e. the forces under the hypostrategos acted as reserves for the attackers at each settlement until it was safe to continue the march up to the next settlement*]. ... the *strategos* should follow along, have the pillaging troops join him, and keep moving up toward the lieutenant general [*i.e. strategos with his forces would have acted as the last reserve*]. ... the *hypostrategos* should turn back and gather the pillagers along his line of march. In the place where the two encounter each other they should set up camp ... the two units should not advance more than fifteen or twenty miles, ... those of the enemy able to put up resistance need not be taken alive, but kill everyone you encounter and move on. When you are marching along do not let them delay you, but take advantage of opportunity.’

See also the diagram/analysis in Syv  ne, 2004. The aim of this tactic was to create mass panic so that the enemy would be unable to organize any effective defence. By refusing to resort to such methods as is described here, some modern militaries lose one of the most effective means of inflicting the enemy with panic – and it is this sort of panic that makes it possible for a small professional force to defeat numerically superior enemy forces fast and effectively even when they are supposedly safe inside their settlements.

4. See Drinkwater’s (2007, 53ff.) excellent analysis of the exploits of the governor of Raetia on the basis of the inscription found in Augsburg in 1992. See also Koepfer.

5. See Geiger, 120ff. Ammianus Marcellinus (14.1.9) notes that Gallienus did not rely only on the reports of his spies, but also made

personal inquiries regarding his own standing among the populace so that he took a few attendants with concealed weapons and roamed the inns and streets in evening at Rome to find out what the populace thought of him. In my opinion, this cannot have been as important for the finding of potential conspirators as the actual reports provided by the spies.

6. See the later discussion on the context of the Decennial of Gallienus.

7. His hedonistic lifestyle suggests rather that he was a follower of the Epicurean philosophy, but there is no evidence for this either in the sources.

8. Blois esp. p.39ff.; Southern, 2001, 91–93; Bray, 165ff.

9. Blois p.39ff., esp. 47ff.; Southern, 2001, 91ff.; Bray, 165ff.

10. Blois p.39ff., esp. 47ff.; Southern, 2001, 91ff.; Bray, 165ff.

11. See Syvanne, *MHLR* 2015.

12. Note the promotion pattern from the positions of *protectores*, *frumentarii* and *peregrini* into higher posts included in Lukas de Blois' list of career patterns (p.39ff.). It is clear that these posts were the stepping stones for higher positions.

13. For example, it is possible that in 252 the fifth column inside the city of Antioch had been the persecuted Christians.

14. Alföldi, *CAH* 12, 203; Bray, 91; Brauer, 97ff. Brauer gives a good overview of the persecution and of the different Christian religious doctrines and heresies, together with a description of the other period faiths such as Gnosticism and Neoplatonism.

15. For a fuller discussion of the economy etc., see Blois, 9ff.; Southern, 2001, 96ff.

16. For a fuller discussion of the economy etc., see Blois, 9ff.; Southern, 2001, 96ff.

17. For the persons mentioned, see PLRE1. Sidebottom's novels give occasional glimpses of the exploits of Postumus.

18. This is based on Drinkwater's (1987) outstanding study, but does still depart from his interpretation in places.

19. It is probable that Postumus had already collected auxiliary forces from the defeated tribesmen immediately after he had defeated the invaders in 260 because this was the standard operating procedure among the Romans, even if the *HA (Gall. 7)* refers to the collecting of auxiliaries only in the context of the second or third major campaign

(the likeliest) by Gallienus after the revolt of Aureolus. However, it is still probable that the *HA* is correct to state that Postumus was forced to collect massive numbers of these only after Gallienus had defeated him in 260–261.

20. This is based on Drinkwater's (1987) outstanding study and my above set of conjectures. See also *HA (Gall. 7)* with the discussion that follows.

21. For a different view and comments on the other interpretations, see Drinkwater, 1987, 168ff.

22. For additional details regarding the wars against barbarian invaders in Gaul under Postumus and his successors, see the studies of Drinkwater.

23. The main sources for the war are *HA (Gall. 2.6–7)*, (*TR* 11.1ff., 12, 13, 14.1, 15.4, 19, 21); Zon. 12.24. The material related to the east can also be found in REF1 72ff. and also in 120.) who quotes and translates some of the sources. Sidebottom's novels, *vol.3* (esp. 307ff.) and *vol.4* describe these same events.

24. Most of the evidence is collected in REF1 72ff.

25. See the sources mentioned at the beginning of the chapter.

26. See the sources mentioned at the beginning of the chapter.

27. Evidence once again collected in REF1 72ff. In Sidebottom's novels, however, he survives.

28. The historians who hold the *HA* in very low esteem usually think that Aureolus revolted only once in 267/268. However, I agree with Sommer (p.51) that it is quite possible that Aureolus did indeed revolt twice.

29. *HA Gall. 4.1ff.*; *HA TR.*, 22; Milne 77–78. Blois (p.107) suggests that Gallienus celebrated the victory of Theodotus in Egypt by minting a coin in Rome in 261 which depicts Serapis. This is quite possible, and it would date the revolt of Aemilianus and its crushing to the year 260–261, but it is also possible that Gallienus minted the coin to celebrate his own recovery from the wound he had received in Gaul in the same year of 261.

30. Names of the locations and detachments in Blois, 31; Saxer 55–7.

31. *HA Gall. 4.6, 21.5.*, *TR. 11.1–3.*

32. It is possible that we should date the siege of Philippopolis mentioned in fragment 24 of Dexippus' *Scythica* (Müller 678ff.) to this

year. This fragment claims that the Goths at first used the ‘tortoise’ array with shields placed above heads to assault the place. However, when the initial attack failed, they used missiles, ladders, siege towers and other siege engines to attack the place. The defenders responded by throwing large stones and burning substances such as pitch and sulfur against the attackers. The Goths in their turn responded by building a dam to raise the water against the walls. The defenders sent one man armed with a vessel containing pitch, sulphur and other similar substances against the dam. When his attack met with success, the besiegers rebuilt the dam by throwing into it prisoners and animals that they killed for this purpose. The defenders in their turn made an opening in their wall and advanced a new wall up to the dam. It was then that the Goths gave up. As said, if this siege is to be dated to the year 262, then it is possible that the imminent arrival of a relief army under Marcianus would have been the main reason for the lifting of the siege. However, it is also possible that this fragment refers actually to an earlier or later siege that may also be otherwise unrecorded. My own educated guess is that this year is the likeliest date.

33.*HA Gall.* 4.6ff, 6, 21.5; *PLRE1 Marcianus2*.

34.The likeliest date for the celebration of the decennial according to Christol (2006b, 110).

35.*HA Gall.* 4.1–6; 7.1–4, 21.5; *HA TR.* 5–6.

36.Geiger (169–171) places the second of the wars against Postumus to the year 266/7 on the basis of the referral of the *HA* which can be interpreted to mean the joint consulship with Victorinus and suggests that it is possible Gallienus abandoned it because of the wounding and the invasion of the Balkans. However, I have here adopted the other date given by the *HA* (the second war against Postumus before the massacre at Byzantium and decennial), but with the caveat that it is likely that there was also a third major campaign in about 266/7. My own educated guess is that there was a continuous state of war from 260 until 268 and that Gallienus led at least two campaigns but probably even three (260–261, 261–262, 266/267), and that the war was conducted by Gallienus’ generals when he was not present in person in Gaul. Sidebottom (vol.6, 263ff.) gives us a good narrative of how the battles in the Alps could have looked.

37.The wounding would have made it difficult for Gallienus to move fast on horseback.

38. *HA Gall.*, 4.6–8, 5.8–9, 7.2–3, 18.1; *TR* 23.

39. *HA Gall.*, 7.4–9.8. *HA Gall.* 8.8.6: ‘*hastae auratae altrinsecus quingenae, vexilla centena praeter ea quae collegiorum erant, dracones et signa templorum omniumque legionum ibant*’. Magie’s translation of this is: ‘On each side of him were borne five hundred gilded spears and one hundred banners, besides those which belonged to the corporations, and the flags of auxiliaries and the statues from sanctuaries and the standards of all the legions.’ I would translate it as follows: ‘On each side of him were 500 golden *hastae*, and besides 100 *vexilla* which belonged to the *collegia*, and the dragons and standards of the temples of all of the legions.’ However, even in Magie’s interpretation, it is clear that the *collegia* had *vexilla* and it is quite clear that the *collegia* in question were military *collegia* and not civilian corporations. Similarly also in *HA Aurelian* (34.4).

40. Bray (333–334) speculates, probably correctly, that Theodotus had to defend his conduct in this affair to the emperor, because there were suspicions that Theodotus had acted hastily or overeagerly. He may even have been suspected of having got rid of a potential competitor by using the allegation that he had revolted or was planning to revolt.

41. The frontier zone of Illyria and Thrace is said to have been commanded by Ulpius Crinitus at that time.

42. *HA TR.*, 23.3, tr. by Magie, 122. It is of course also possible that Antoninus would mean the earlier Antoninus Uranius.

43. Names of the locations and detachments in Blois, 31; Saxer 55–7.

44. For the assumption of the title, see Christol (2006b, 118). De Blois places the war against Postumus in which Gallienus was wounded to the year 265, but in my opinion this is a mistake.

45. P.Oxy. IX 1194 with PLRE 1.

46. In the early 5th century there were similar problems, which in that case were caused by the cooling of the climate and excessive rainfalls in the deserted regions. See Syvanne, *MHLR* Vol.3.

Chapter 7

1. Some historians place the second (or only) war against Postumus to this year (e.g. Sommer p.54), but I agree with Bray that it is likely that Gallienus actually did nothing significant during 265 because the sources are silent about any major activity.

2. Porphyry, *Vita Plotini* 12; for additional info regarding the Plotinus affair, see Bray, 244– 249; Geiger 268–275.

3. See e.g. *HA Gall.* 6–9, 11, 12.2–5, 16.1ff. with Bray, 205ff.

4. *HA Gall.* 17.1, tr. by Magie p.53.

5. *HA Gall.* 6.4ff, tr. with slight changes by Magie, p.29.

6. *HA Gall.* 16. The *reticulum* was a small net, hairnet or network bag.

7. See Bray's (215ff.) comments regarding these.

8. For a slightly different interpretation, see Drinkwater (1987, esp. 23–36, 148ff.). He accepts one of the commonly-held theories that Gallienus' second campaign against Postumus must have occurred in 265.

9. According to Drinkwater (1987, 32–34), Postumus debased his coinage in 268. There was a second rash of coin-hoarding occurring just before this debasement that also continued during it. To me this suggests the possibility that there may have been a third or fourth campaign against Postumus in 266–267, as implied by the *HA* with the inclusion of Victorinus as *princeps* by Postumus.

10. However, see also Drinkwater (1987, esp. 23–36, 148ff.) for an alternative view.

11. REF 1 (68ff.) collects the evidence.

12. Peter f.183/Banchich, 120–123.

13. Peter f183–185, Banchich 120–124.

14. The intriguing point in this fragment is the possibility that Zenobia had conspired with his Roman friends against Gallienus. Had she managed to assassinate Gallienus by using Roman generals as her tools? Zenobia must at least have known Heraclianus, who was the principal force behind the assassination of Gallienus. Similarly, if Aurelian had met Zenobia during his short stay in the east, it is possible that he too could have become enamoured with the beautiful Zenobia. This would explain why Zenobia survived to die of old age after Aurelian had captured her, if this version of her end is true and

not the one in which she was executed.

15. REF1 80ff. collects the evidence.

16. Still another but the least likely explanation would be that Zenobia refused to hand over the reigns of power to Heraclianus and refused to support the Roman war effort. In that case she would have conspired with the Persians and Armenians and led Heraclianus' army into a trap. See the discussion in the *HA* (TR. 30.13ff.). Zenobia drank with the Persians and the Armenians, which probably implies that Zenobia concluded a truce with them. This may also imply that she could even have conspired with them to destroy Heraclianus' army. On the other hand, it seems very unlikely that the Persians would not have advertised their victory over Heraclianus if they had scored such at this time. Consequently, it is more likely that if the Romans ever lost an army that it happened during the course of the retreat from Ctesiphon. However, even this is suspect (see below). Zenobia's relationship with Rome remained friendly throughout Gallienus' reign and soured only after Claudius assumed the reigns of power. According to the very untrustworthy Malalas (12.14) Gallienus, immediately after assuming power, began a campaign against Persia. He remitted taxes for four years and assisted those who had suffered. He also supposedly built a temple at Emesa and further joined battle with the Persians and after many on both sides had fallen made a peace treaty with them. After this he allegedly turned back, went to Arabia and joined battle with Enathos and killed him, and then returned to Rome where he died at the age of 50. If there is any germ of truth in this fanciful account, it is possible that Malalas has preserved an eastern tradition that credited Gallienus with a victory over the Palmyrenes. This would mean that Heraclianus' campaign against Persia and/or Palmyra was not such a failure after all - if it indeed took place. And after he had concluded a peace, Gallienus had left his troops and the East to the care of Zenobia. Another possibility is that Heraclianus and Odaenathus had both campaigned together with success against the Persians, followed by the peace with Persia and murder of Odaenathus. However, these quite fanciful alternatives are not as likely as the one included in the text proper.

17. Most modern historians tend to divide the action so that Gallienus defeated the Goths at the Nestos River in Macedonia and Claudius separately at Naissus. This view is well represented by David S. Michaels and L.A. Hambly (p.35) in their article that summarizes well the older and current views among the historians. However, I

have adopted the view that all major battles were fought during the reign of Gallienus because it is clear that the *HA* places those under his rule (see my analysis) and because it is clear that Claudius never reached the theatre of operations while he was emperor but died en route there at Sirmium. Note also that Victor (34.2-6) claims that Claudius sacrificed himself to the gods by dying and that it was as a result of this that the Goths were expelled after his death. In other words, it was his death and not his victories that brought about this.

18. It would be easy to dismiss this as a doublet of *HA Gall.* 12.6, but it is clear that it is not because the details are different when one pays closer attention to those.

19. In other words, Gallienus followed the strategy of defensive guerrilla warfare, which is later described in greater detail by Vegetius' *Epitome*, *Strategikon* and *De Velitatione Bellica*. These later treatises recommended the use of guerrilla warfare against numerically superior foe until it would be exhausted and returning back to its own territory at which point it would then be engaged in combat. The *Strategikon* also advised the commander to avoid fighting a pitched battle with the Germanic peoples in the initial stages of the war and the use of guerrilla warfare to weaken it until the time was right for a pitched battle. For further details, see Syv  ne, *The Age of Hippotaxotai*. It is quite clear that Gallienus had adopted this very strategy in this situation in which he faced numerically superior migrating mass of Germanic peoples.

20. In Syncellus (*AM* 5762–3) it is the Heruli alone who are claimed to have invaded Roman territory during the reign of Gallienus and Claudius, with the implication that both Heruli and Goths invaded the Balkans at the same time. The *HA (Gall.* 13.6–10) associates the events described by Zosimus under Claudius (1.41–45, esp. 42–43) as happening during the reign of Gallienus. Consequently, I have here decided to follow Alf  ldi's conclusion that Gallienus crushed the main invasion and that Claudius and Aurelian then simply did the mopping-up. In the following reconstruction I use Zosimus' text as the skeleton which I flesh out with the information taken from other sources, mainly from the *HA* and Syncellus.

21. Mentioned in Blois (108).

22. I have discussed the tactical use of the storm by the Romans in a research paper at the McMullen Symposium in 2015. This paper will be published as a book chapter in a forthcoming book devoted naval warfare.

23.Sources collected in PLRE1, *Aureolus*.

24.Syncellus AM5748.

25.Syncellus AM 5478 with Brauer; and Zonaras 2.26 with the comments of Banchich. It is possible to reconcile the claims of the different sources (some claim that Dexippus defeated the Heruls while Zonaras gives the credit to Cleodemus) regarding the defeat of the Heruls at Athens. Both were responsible for the success. Dexippus defeated the Heruls on land while Cleodemus' fleet attacked the Herul fleet at Piraeus. It is also probable that both cooperated because Dexippus refers to this. See the map of Piraeus and Athens for the location. It should be noted that the existence of only a single Scythian invasion in Zonaras and other 'Byzantine' sources (Symeon, Cedrenus, Synopsis), which they place to the reign of Claudius, can indeed also be used to support the claim that there was only one major Scythian invasion in which most of the major actions took place during the reign of Gallienus.

26.See above with Alföldi (CAH, 149)! On the other hand, it is equally possible that Marcianus could have been reappointed to defend Achaëa, if he had previously distinguished himself there in 262.

27.Syncellus's (AM 5478) Battle of Nestus took place later.

28.The bypassing of the Goths was possible thanks to the fact that there were two mountains that blocked the view from the other road or roads after Amphipolis as one marched towards Byzantium.

29.In this context it is good to remember Callwell's (p.307) comments on the value of cavalry in hill warfare: 'Cavalry can of course do nothing on hill sides or in narrow valleys; but the terror which horsemen inspire among mountaineers renders this arm particularly valuable whenever there is fairly level country within the area of a day's operations. If other arms can drive the hill-men on to ground where cavalry can work, troopers may be enabled to perform splendid service, and their presence in wide open valleys such as are often found jutting up into the mountains, will often afford most useful support to the flanks of troops moving along the slopes'. Gallienus clearly judged the situation correctly! As regards the location of Mount Haemus or Haemimontus/Gessaces, there is actually another possible explanation, which has so far been overlooked. South-East of Naissus there is a town called Hammeum and just north of it there is a mountain. If this Hammaëum has been confused with Haemimontus, then it is possible that immediately after the Battle of

Naissus the Goths were isolated on this mountain where they were engaged again. However, I have here adopted another solution for two reasons: first, my current reconstruction reconciles the sources; and second, the *HA* associates Haemimontus with Thrace. Therefore, it is likelier that Haemimontus is the Haemus Range, which is also closer to it in spelling.

30. See my discussion of the sexual habits of the Heruls in the *MHLR* vol.1

31. For the referral, see PLRE1, *Marcianus* 2 (the inscription is also available online).

32. It is possible that this story should also be placed to the time of Gallienus' assassination when the conspirators are claimed to have killed Gallienus' brother in the camp.

33. The title is borrowed from Bray, 293, and the date from Saunders. Banchich (Zonaras 12.25, pp.114–116), Bray (239ff.), Cizek (22–23) and Geiger (173ff.) have collected the evidence. In the main I have followed Bray's conclusions (see 293ff.), but there are some minor differences of opinion between us, however both of us lay the blame on Claudius. In addition to this, I present also the other alternatives. For referrals to the sources, see the narrative and Bray.

34. It is actually possible that Gallienus had angered Heraclianus with his practical joke mentioned by the *HA*. According to this text, Gallienus had often sent ugly women prostitutes as gifts to his praetorian prefects and *magistri officiorum* while he himself took the beautiful women. See Trebellius Pollio (*Historia Augusta, Gallieni Duo* 17.8–9) and the illustration included among the plates. It is in fact possible that the joke in question was the only reason for the presence of Heraclianus' role among the assassins, if he was a petty-minded person. This is by no means impossible. There are always petty-minded people around.

35. Zonaras 2.25, *HA* (*Gall.*, esp. 14–15); Aur. Vict. 33. See the summary of the various later versions in Zonaras/Banchich pp.114–116.

Chapter 8

1. See e.g. *HA* (*Aur.* 18–21); *Epit.* 35. Aurelian appears to have lost most of the elite *equites* of Gallienus in this battle, with the result that the famous *equites* disappear from the sources. The details given by the *HA* prove that the Battle of Placentia was a cavalry battle. According to the *HA*, the Marcomanni were unable to meet the Romans in open battle (unsurprising in light of the effectiveness of Gallienus' *equites*) and therefore feigned flight and fled to a very thick forest. When Aurelian foolishly followed, the enemy defeated the Romans as evening fell. The use of forests was the standard method employed by armies whose main strength lay in infantry to negate the advantages of cavalry in open terrain: i.e. the use of forested terrain negated the superior speed and mobility of the cavalry. It seems very probable that Aurelian lost most of his first cavalry battle line at this battle, because when he encountered the Palmyrene cataphracts in 272 his cavalry consisted mainly of lightly-equipped Dalmatian and Moorish cavalry (see Zos. 1.50.1–53.3), and we should not forget that the Moorish cavalry had fought in the second support line under Gallienus and had therefore survived the disaster at Placentia. If the Dalmatian cavalry was posted where the *Illyriciani* were later, then the implication is that Aurelian lost his entire left wing and centre of the first line with its more heavily-equipped units but not his right wing units. It is notable that Gallienus was apparently never ambushed himself while he ambushed the enemy many times.

Chapter 9

1.Zosimus 1.44.2 with the *HA* (*Claud.*; *Aur.*). The fates of Heraclianus and Cecropius have become confused in the sources (see Watson p.42 with the PLRE1 *Heraclianus*) so that John of Antioch claimed that Heraclianus was the commander of the Dalmatian horse who killed Gallienus and then committed suicide. It is entirely plausible that Cecropius did indeed commit suicide if, for example, ordered to do so by Claudius or because he realized that he had been fooled by Aureolus' forged letter, but we do not know this for certain because it is possible that it was the real Heraclianus who was the person who committed suicide after his failure in the east (see below). Still another possibility is that both persons committed suicide, as suggested by Watson.

2.In fact, if there is any truth behind this story, it might actually be possible that some of the actions, such as the order to stop the persecution of Gallienus' relatives and friends, were made by this Claudius!

3.However, it might be possible to guess that the *HA* has dated the usurper to the wrong reign. If this were the case, then it is possible that we should equate Censorinus with Urbanus, who usurped power at Rome during Aurelian's reign in 271. The use of the name Claudius could in this case be seen as a gesture on the part of Claudius' and Quintillus' supporters to show continuity with Claudius II's policies towards the Senate.

4.Potter, 265.

5.Zonaras 12.26.

6.At this point my interpretation differs from that of Watson.

7.Dexippus *Scyth.* fr. 28; see the analysis in Drinkwater, 2007, 73–75.

8.*Epitome de Caesaribus* 34.2; Watson, 43.

9.Potter, 263–4; Watson 44.

10.Saunders (168ff.) collects the evidence for the timing of the Iuthungi invasion.

11.This chapter is based on Drinkwater's (1987) outstanding study of the Gallic Empire and on Potter (263–4) and my previous discussion. Note, however, that my reconstruction still differs in places from Drinkwater's version.

12. Nicopolis commemorated Trajan's victory over the Dacians. See in general Amm. 31.5.

13. See the letter from Claudius to Aurelian included in the *HA* (*Aurelian* 16.1–17.4, letter in 17.1–4). Its contents ring true.

14. Negotiations between Zenobia and the Persians in *HA TR.* 30.18. The text actually states that she drank with the Persians and Armenians, but this must have occurred during some kind of negotiations after the war between Odaenathus and the Persians. The following analysis of events is mostly based on Zosimus 1.44.

15. The details of the minting of various coins here and below referred to in Watson, 221–223.

16. *HA Claud.* 11.1; Zosimus 1.44; Malalas 12.28; Watson, 60–64; Southern, 2008, 106–107. The invasion of Egypt must have been launched either in late September or early October 270, because the papyrus finds at Oxyrhynchus still recognize Claudius as emperor in late September. The mint at Alexandria had also already started to mint coins in Quintillus' name after 29 August 270, but the series was soon discontinued. The region south of Memphis never recognized Quintillus, but dated their papyri according to Roman consuls from 12 October until mid-November or mid-December. After that, the papyri named Aurelianus and Vaballathus jointly again, suggesting Zenobia's attempt to reach reconciliation with Aurelianus. The details of the minting of various coins and info on the papyri referred to in Watson, 60–64, 221–223.

17. Zosimus 1.44. For alternative reconstructions, see Southern, 2008, 110–115; or Watson, 62–63.



Drawings of coins by Strada (1553)

Top left: Coin of Balista/Ballista; **Top centre:** Coin of Piso; **Top right:** Coin of Aemilianus (usurper in Egypt).
The provenance of these coins is very suspect.



Decius. (Bernoulli)



Coin of Trebonius Gallus. (*Bernoulli*)



Two coins of Postumus. (*Bernoulli*)



Coin of Aemilianus. (*Bernoulli*)



A coin of Volusianus, the son of Gallus. (*Bernoulli*)



Laelianus. (*Bernoulli*)



Marius. (*Delaroche, 1845*)



Victorinus. (*Bernoulli*)



Tetricus. (*Bernoulli*)



Macrianus jr. (*Bernoulli*)



Zenobia. (*Bernoulli*)



Waballathus. (*Bernoulli*)



Uranus Antoninus. Note the sideburns, which recall Caracalla.
(Bernoulli)



Saloninus Valerianus. (*Bernoulli*)



Valerian (Valerianus) Junior. (*Bernoulli*)



Valerian (Valerianus). (*Bernoulli*)



Salonina. (*Bernoulli*)



Gallienus. (*Bernoulli*)



Gallienus. (*Bernoulli*)



Gallienus on his so-called 'gender-bender' Galliena coin. (*Bernoulli*)



Claudius II. Note the cavalry combat on the chest armour. He was indeed a superb cavalry commander. (*Bernoulli*)



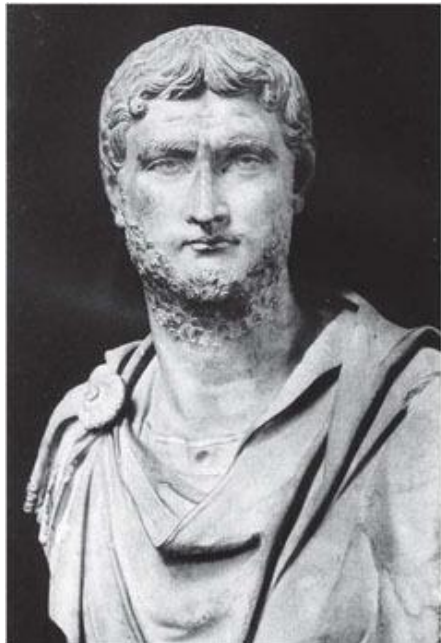
Quintillus, brother of Claudius II. (*Bernoulli*)



Aurelian (Aurelianus). (*Bernoulli*)



Probus. (Bernoulli)



A bust of Gallienus at the Louvre. (*Bernoulli*)



A possible bust of Gallienus in a nineteenth-century photo.



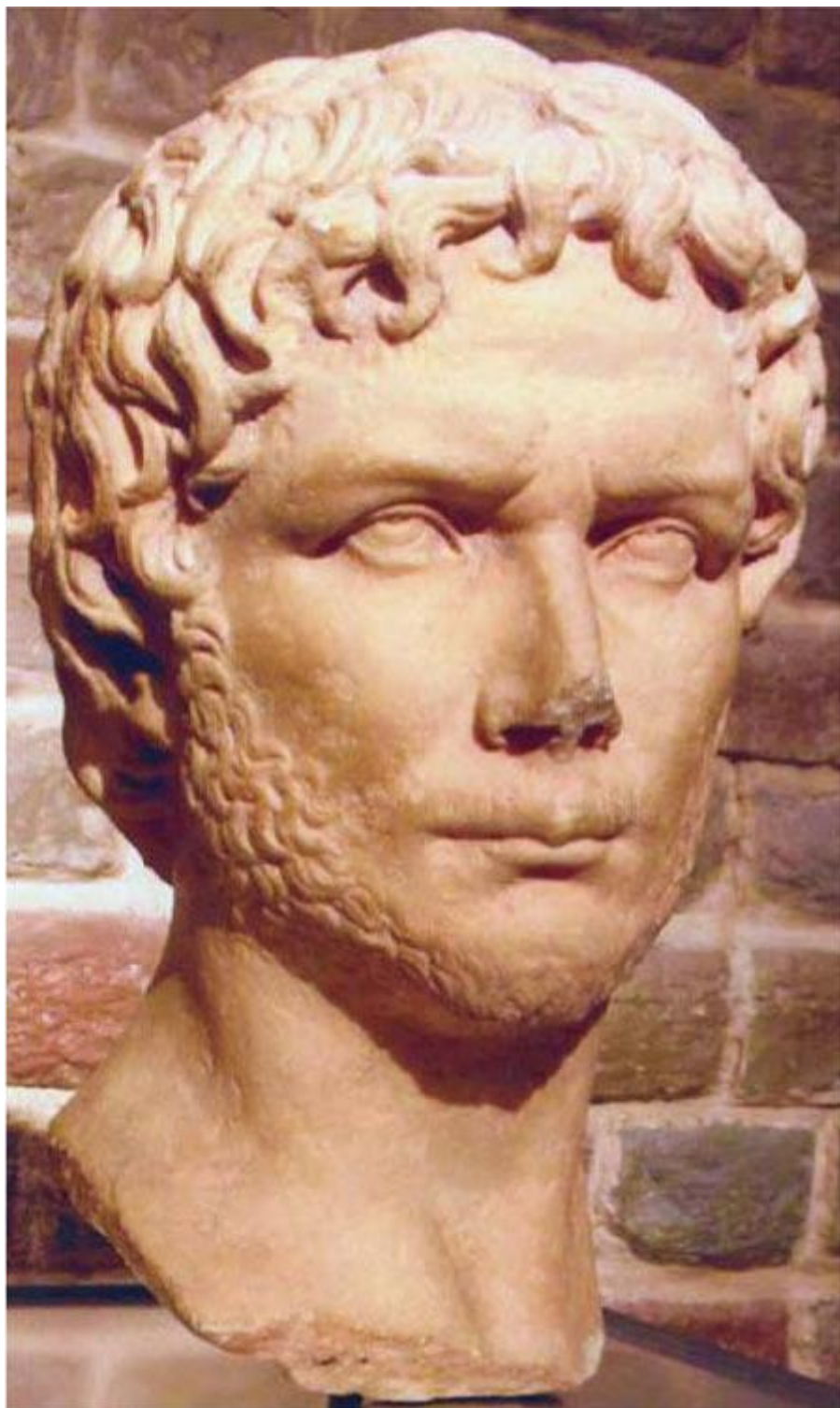
Radiate Valerian drawn after the Carlsberg Copenhagen bust (the rays of the diadem and nose have been restored to the bust).



The Berlin bust of Gallienus. It clearly depicts him at a younger age, possibly in the 250s. (*The public domain photo has been coloured by the author*)



Radiate Gallienus drawn after the Carlsberg bust (the rays of the diadem and nose have been restored to the bust). This diadem and the facial features suggest that this bust was sculpted during the joint rule.

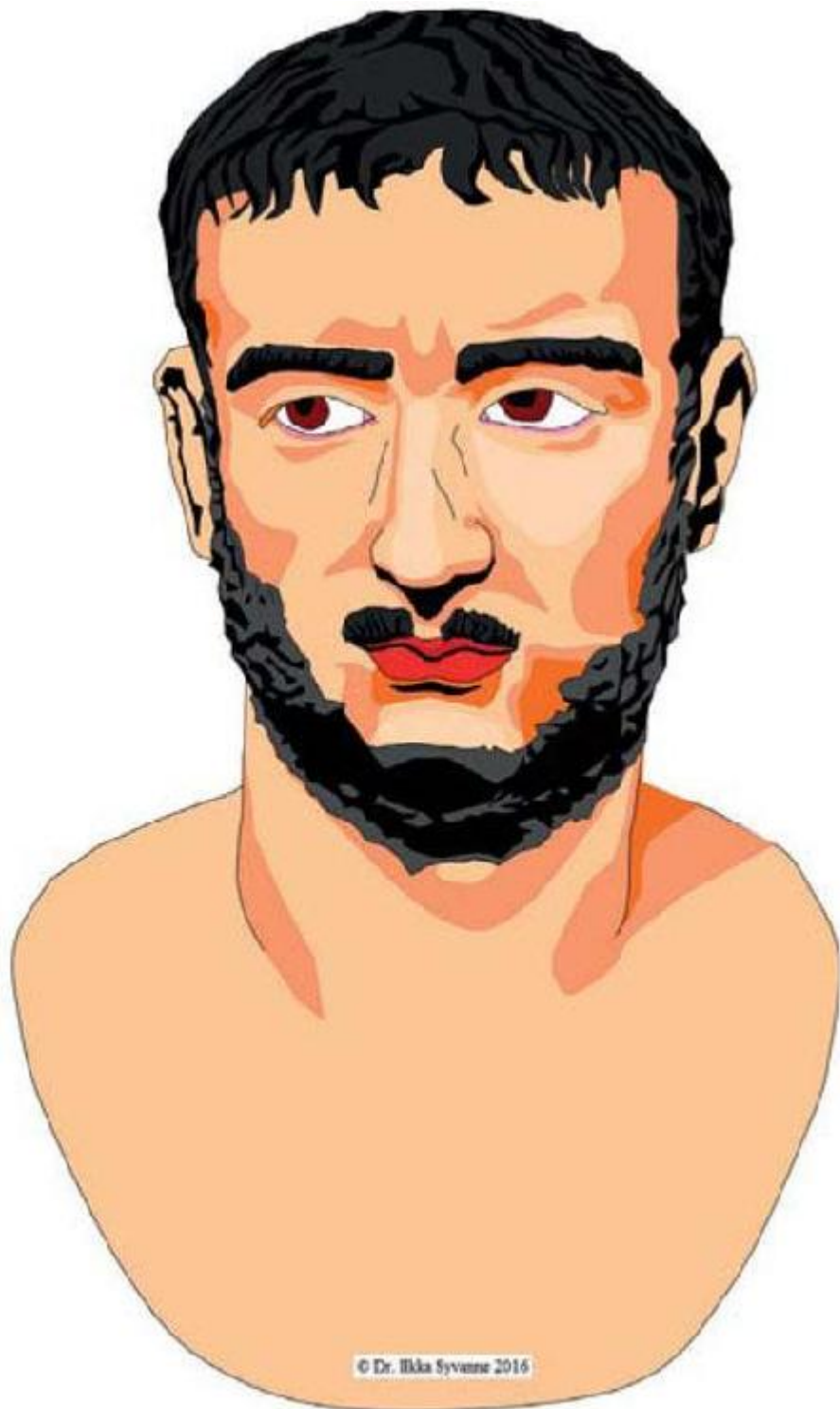


Salonina. (Drawn after a copy at Hermitage, St. Petersburg, available

online at Wikipedia, with clothes slightly simplified)



Cologne (Köln) bust of Gallienus once again depicts him at a younger age, possibly in the 250s. (*Public domain*)



One of the Capitoline busts of Gallienus, which appears to represent

him at a younger age, possibly in the late 250s.



A coin of Gallienus. British Museum. (*Photo by the author*)

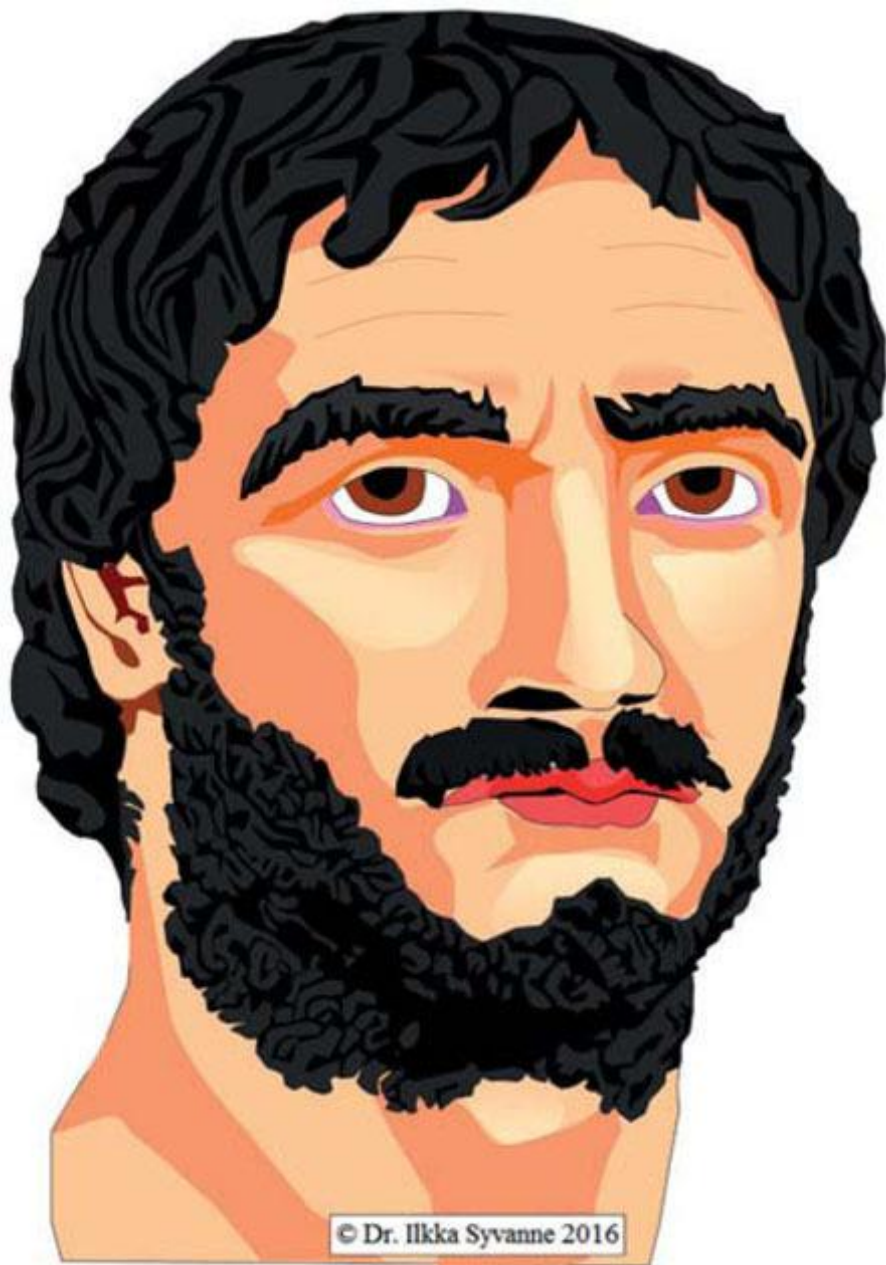


A drawing of still another bust in the Capitoline depicting Gallienus possibly in the 250s.



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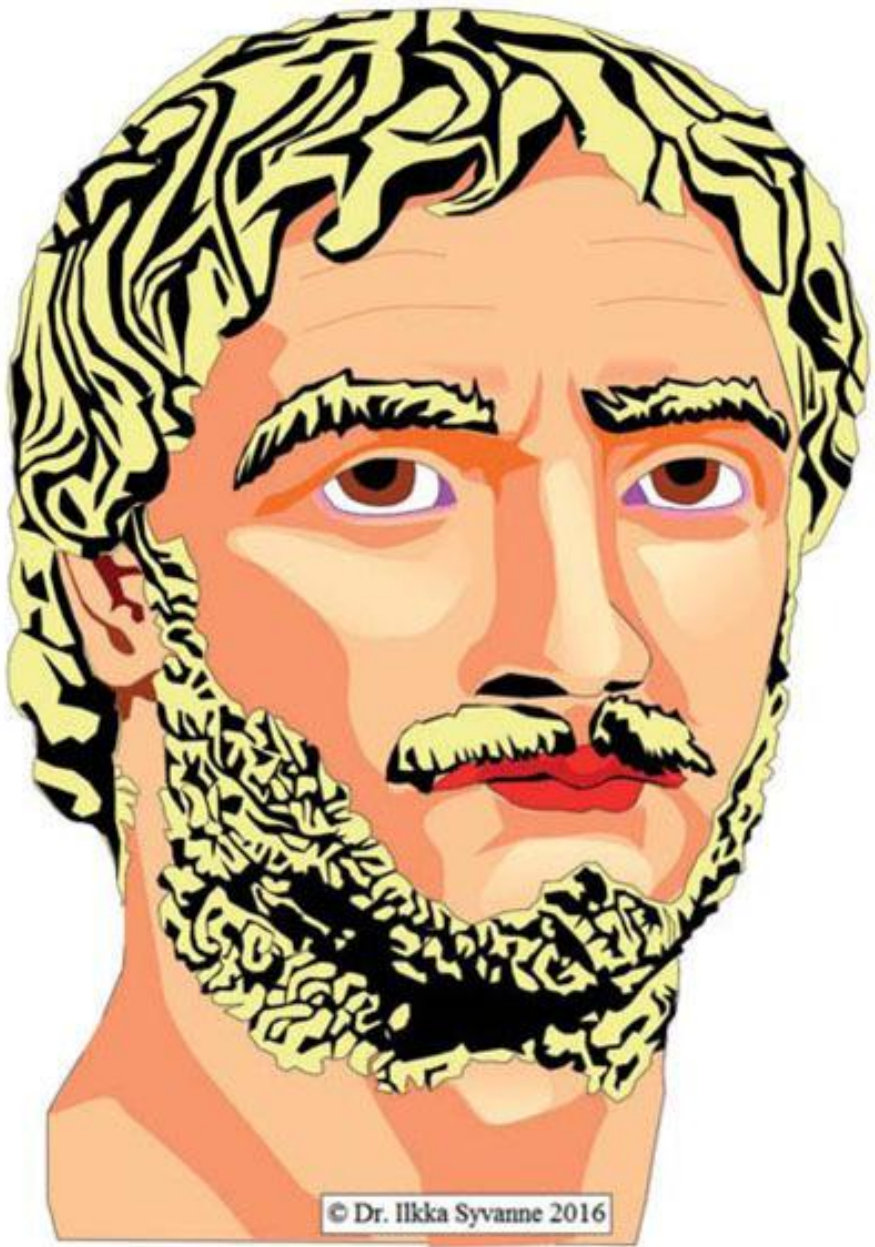
Gallienus, the bust portion of the drawing is drawn after the bust located at Capitol, Hall of the Emperors 70, in Rome. He is wearing golden armour.



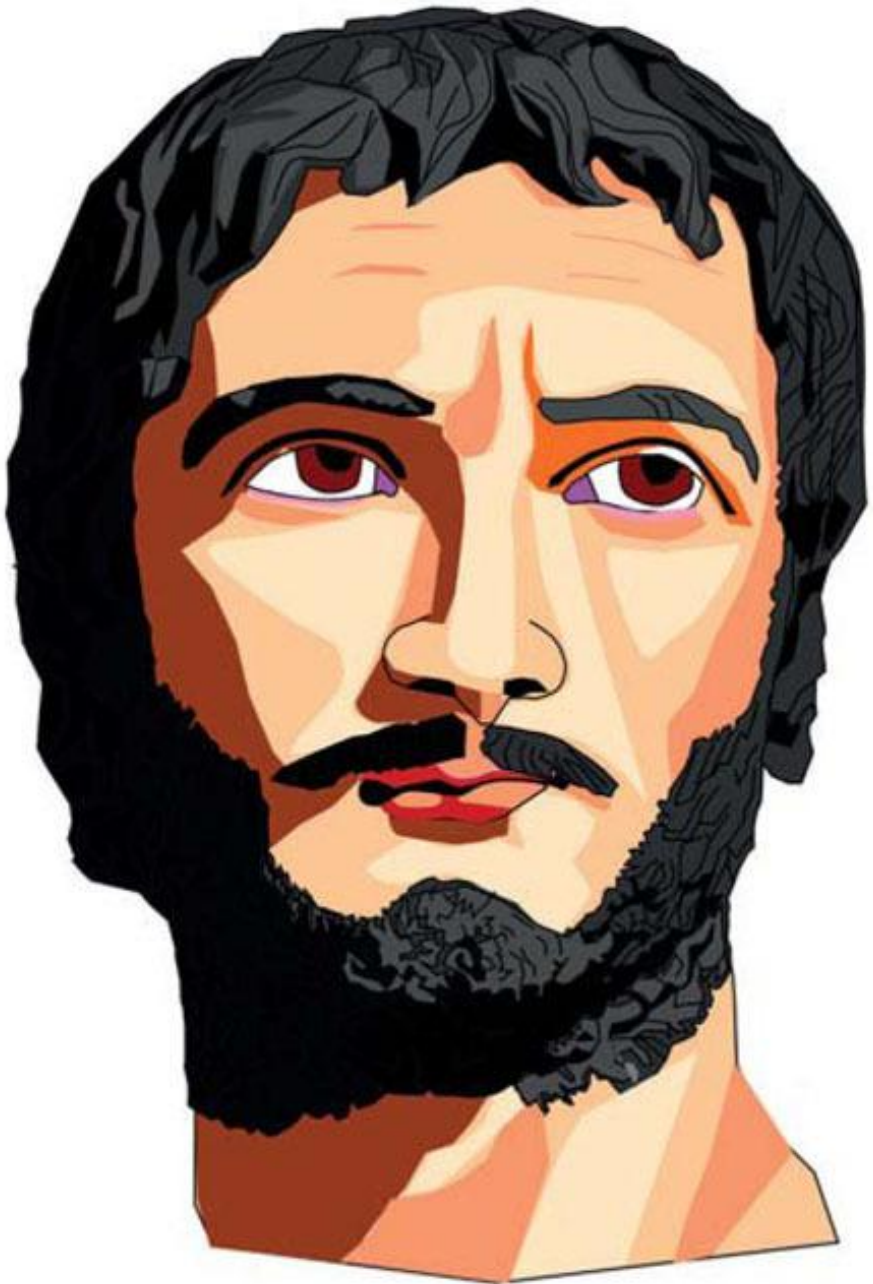
A drawing of one of the statues preserved in Italy.



A bust of Gallienus drawn after the Brussels bust.



The same bust with hair dyed blond, which Gallienus and his retinue did to please Pipa/Pipara (*HA Gall.* 21.3-4)



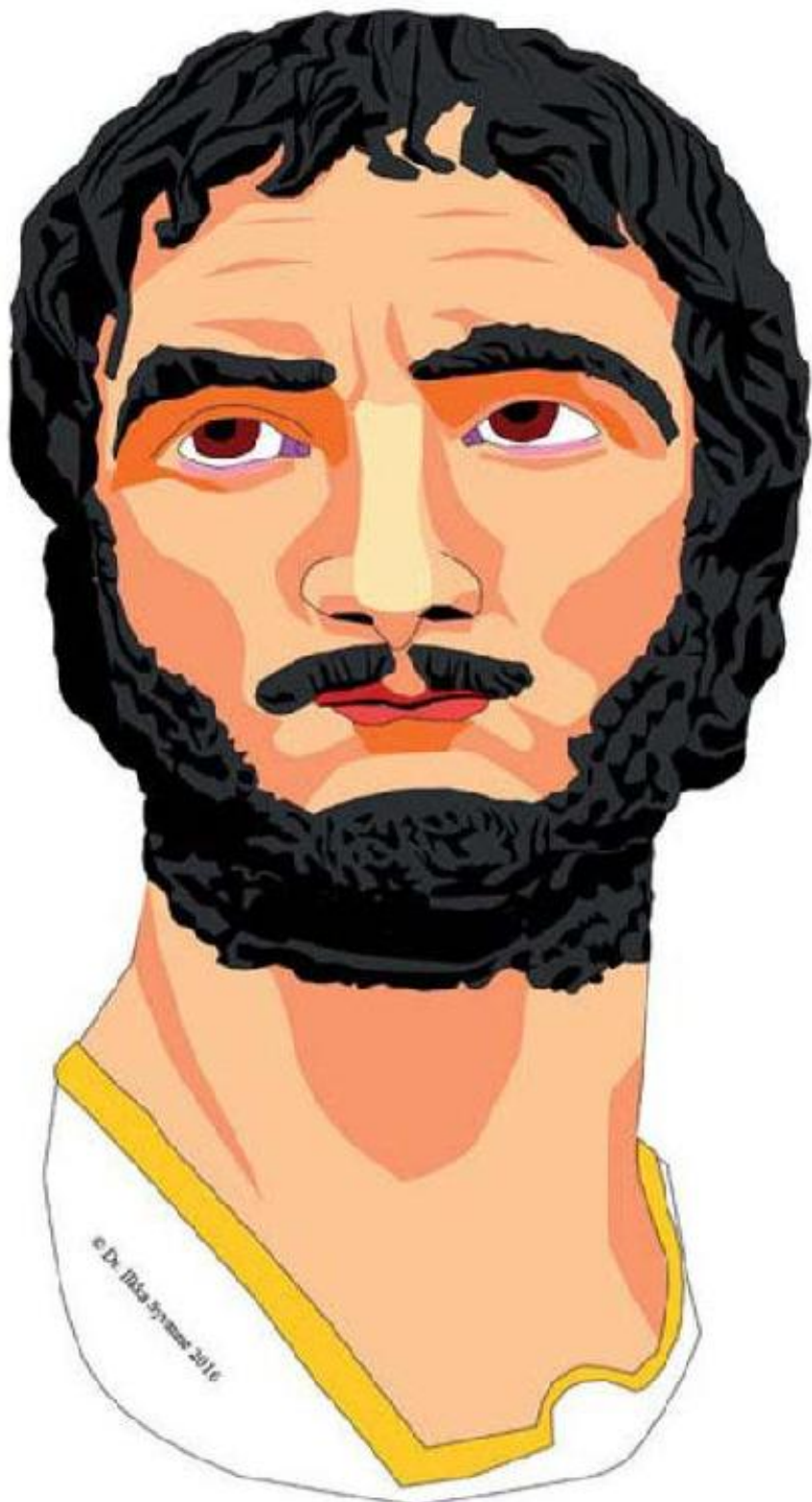
A bust of Gallienus drawn after one of the extant busts in Italy.



A drawing of Gallienus based on the Torlonia bust.



Gallienus (head from the Louvre bust) depicted as he would have appeared in Rome (*HA Gall.* 16.3-5) with radiate diadem, sleeved tunic, jewelled *balteus* (waistbelt) and ‘reticulate boots’ (Gallienus’ own nickname for his boots with jewels attached to the laces; in this case I have reconstructed those as pearls). It is possible that Gallienus’ intention in calling such jewelled boots ‘reticulate’ was actually to insult the rich Roman senators as effeminate men who did not fight in the field of battle. This would have been doubly insulting because Gallienus had forbidden the senators from holding command of legions. By wearing the military uniform in the city of Rome Gallienus also signalled to all (especially to the Senate) that his power rested on his control of military forces. Gallienus’ intention was also to irritate and annoy the traditionalists with these gestures and names. Even though not mentioned by the *HA* in this same context, I have made the educated guess that Gallienus could also have worn the armour for the very same reason.

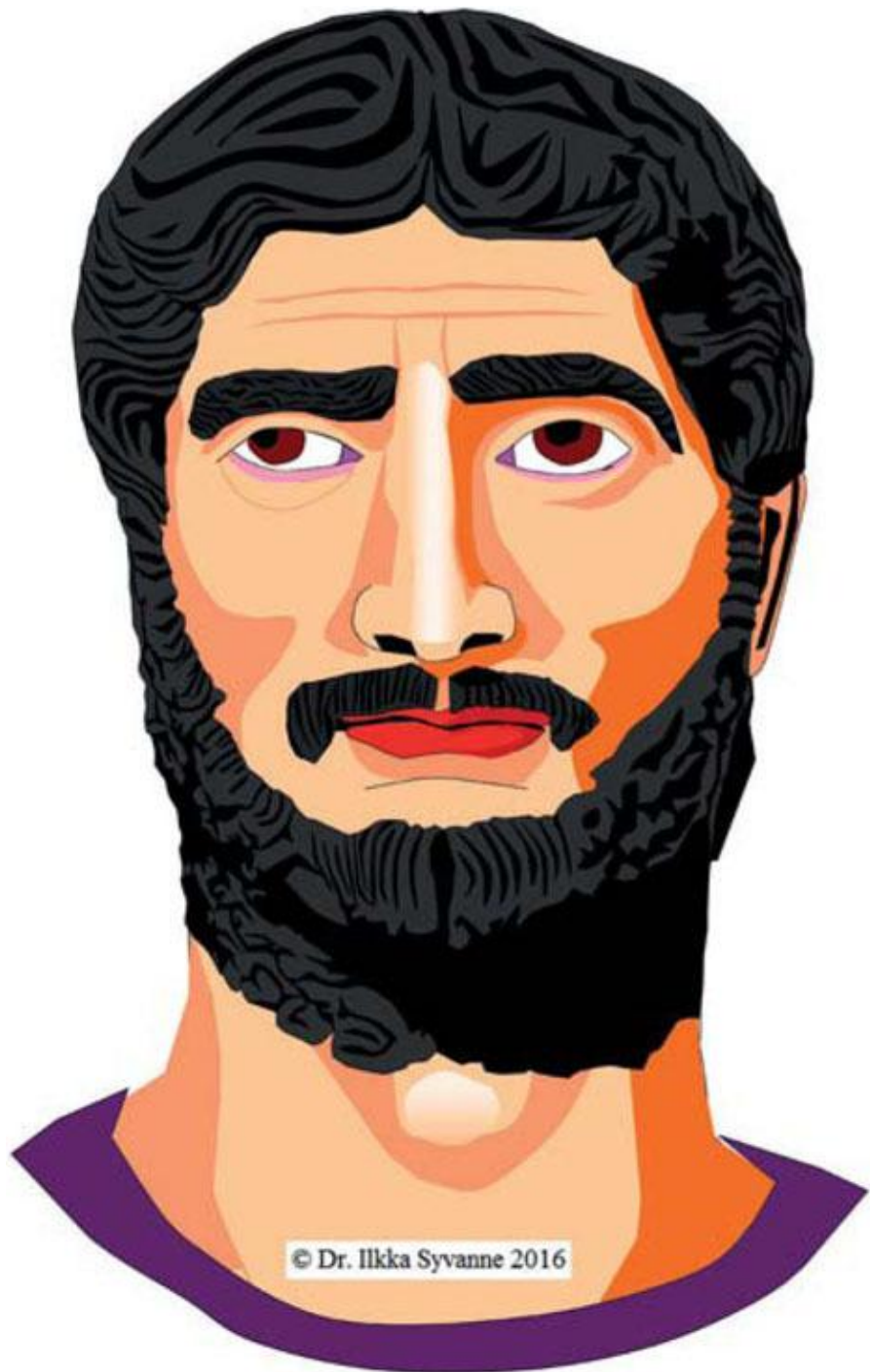


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A drawing of a bust in Italy.



Gallienus, drawn after a bust in Rome. It is probable that this bust depicts Gallienus in his late 40s, very close to his date of death at the hands of an assassin at the age of 50.



Gallienus, drawn after one of the Carlsberg busts. This bust shows a mature Gallienus possibly at the age of 50.



Claudius or Aurelian, drawn after the Brescia bust.



Odaenathus, drawn after a bust claimed to represent him; attribution uncertain.



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Foot archer.
Foot archer.



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Legionary (partially after a re-enactor photo).



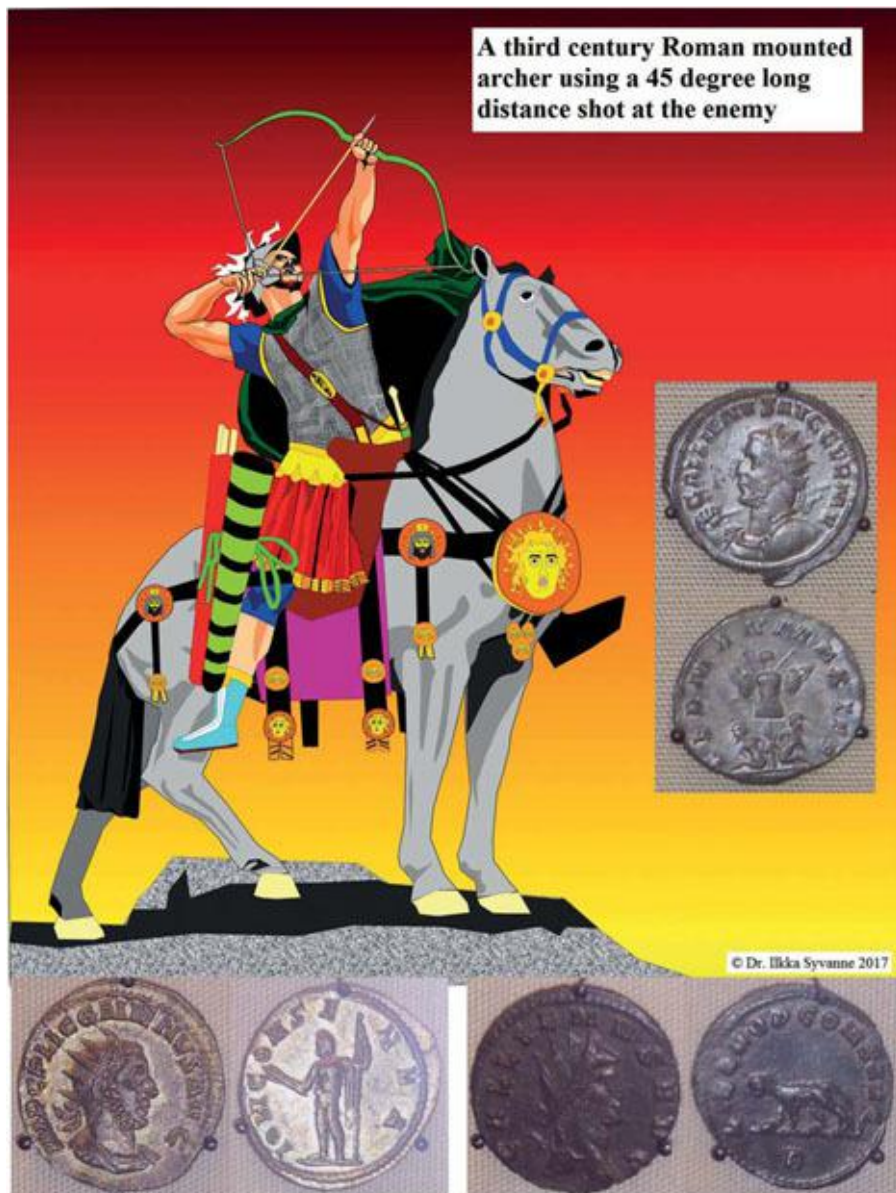
lanciarus.



A member of the imperial bodyguards (partially after Ludovisi Sarcophagus).



Legionary in old-style *lorica segmentata* and using similarly old-style shield.



Author's drawing of a third-century mounted archers, and three coins of Gallienus at the British Museum. (Photos by the author)



An irregular wedge of *cataphractarii* of Gallienus charging at the infantry of Macrianus, the arch-enemy of the Christians. The officer at the apex of the wedge has placed a cross on top of his Berkasovo-style helmet to taunt the enemy. The rest of the men are pagans. The helmets in this image reflect the great variety of helmets in use at the time. The earliest known example of the Berkasovo-helmet is of course later, but I have here made the educated guess that such helmets could have been worn earlier, during the reign of Gallienus, because it is known that ridge-and segmented-helmets were used in the Roman armies from at least the first century onwards thanks to the presence of Parthians and Sarmatians in the Roman armies. Note also the different ways of placing the quiver and the use of metal protection for the hooves. The faces have been borrowed from modern reenactors. (© Dr. Ilkka Syvännä 2017)



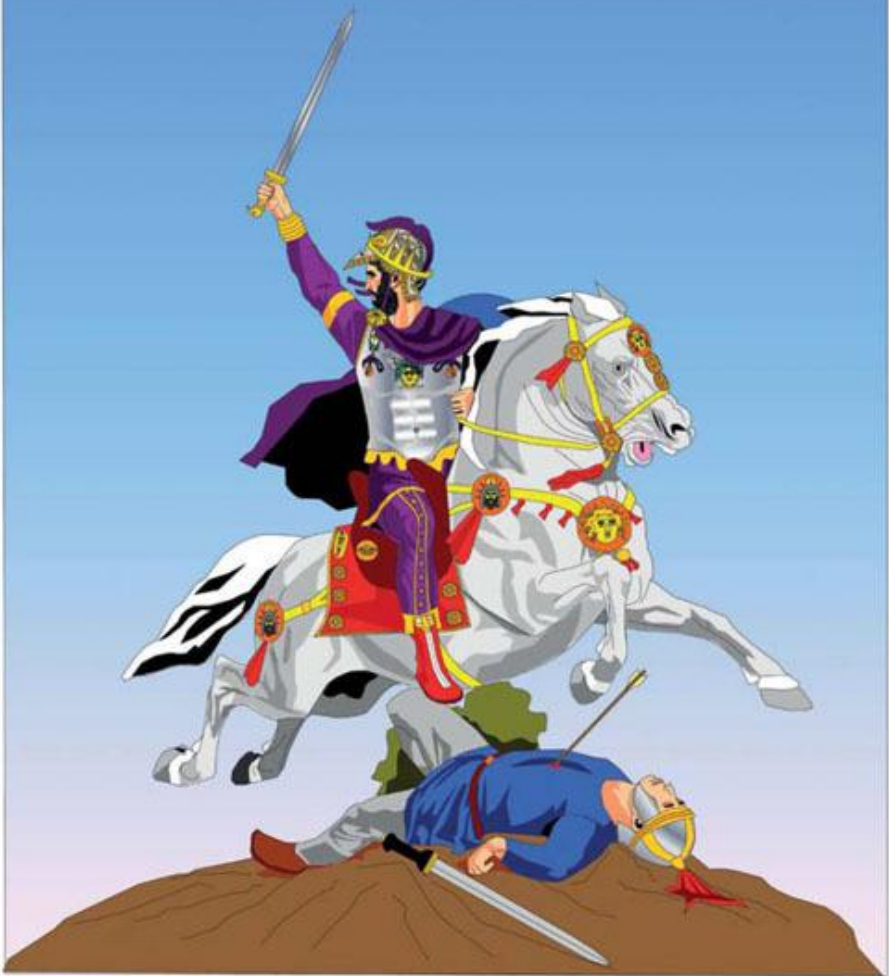
Gallienus in cavalry combat. He was a man who was quite prepared to put his own life on the line and even to challenge enemy leaders to duels to the death. This is based on a painting of Rubens, which in its turn is based on a drawing of Da Vinci.



Gallienus' horse performs a *courbette*-jump.

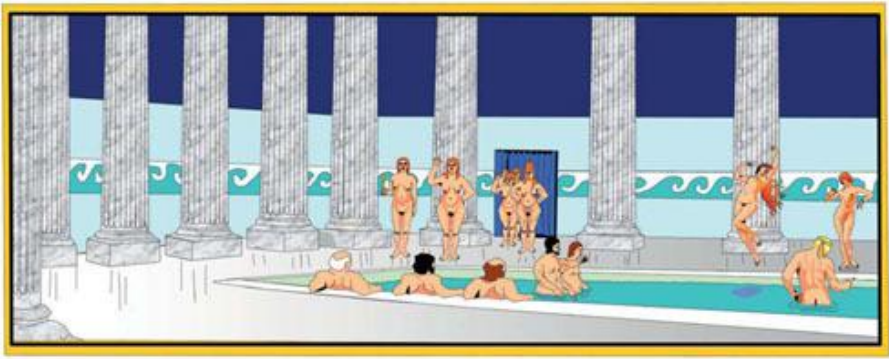


Gallienus spearing a soldier of Postumus. This image as been inspired by numerous paintings in which St. George kills a dragon. The horseman on the left has been drawn after the Ludovisi Sarcophagus (mid-third century). The mounted archer on the right is based on my earlier illustrations.



This scene depicts Gallienus leading a cavalry charge against the Goths. Note the decorations on the really fancy radiate helmet. The Gothic warrior (below his jumping horse) has been killed by an arrow shot in the preparatory stage of the cavalry charge. The typical cavalry charge began with an advance at a trot. When the horsemen reached shooting range, they shot one arrow and then charged and shot two additional volleys of arrows in the course of their attack, before they crashed into the enemy formation or retreated and used the 'Parthian shot' during the retreat. The charge was done either at a trot, canter or gallop depending on the situation. The scene is inspired by M. Bartholdi's statue of Vergingetorix. The clothing and equipment has been modelled after period works of art (e.g. coins) and the

colouring after the description of Gallienus' clothing in the *HA*.



My artistic impression of one of the practical jokes of Gallienus according to Trebellius Pollio (*Historia Augusta, Gallieni Duo* 17.8–9).
Full caption on p.viii, 34.